

THE DIAL³³

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AN AUTOBIOGRAPHIC CHAPTER

BY RANDOLPH BOURNE

GILBERT was almost six years old when they all—Mother, Olga, and baby—went to live with Garna in her tall white house. And his expanding life leaped to meet the wide world, with its new excitements and pleasures. It was like a rescue, like getting air when one is smothering. Here was space and a new largeness to things. Gilbert was freed forever from the back-street.

Garna's house was ridiculous but it was not despicable. For your meals you went down into a dark basement dining-room, behind a blacker kitchen. And the outhouse, buried in Virginia creepers and trumpet-vine, was down a long path bordered by grape-vines, where you went fearfully at night. Gilbert was afraid of this dark, long after he was old enough to be ashamed that his mother must come with him and stand protectingly outside. In winter, the stars shone at him with icy brilliancy, and the vines made a thick menacing mass around him.

Back of the house was a pump, painted very bright and green, where the water came up cold and sparkling and ran suddenly out of its spout over your shoes unless you were careful. And when they had finished pumping, the well would give a long, deep sigh, whether of fatigue or satisfaction, Gilbert never knew. In the dark kitchen, which you entered down a flight of stone steps, there was another pump, but it brought forth, after long persuasion, only rain-water which to Gilbert tasted uninteresting, and which he was not allowed to drink, but which they carried in zinc pails up two long spidery flights, and for Aunt Nan's room, three, so that you could wash your face in the morning. Only on wash-day, was that pump

interesting when the servant filled great wooden tubs out of it, and created huge foamy waves in them, and beat and rubbed, and then filled long clothes-lines with damp white garments which coiled around you clammily and disgustingly if you ran too close under them when you were playing.

The dining-room always had a musty smell, and was always cold in winter, though the door into the warm kitchen was propped open with a brick. Gilbert would eat his breakfast and run out quickly to warm his hands at the shining black range. In the summer, it was close and stuffy, for it was lighted only by two low windows at the top which were level with the ground and opened into a little depression, so that the shutters would move freely. In the great thunder-storms of summer, this hollow would fill with water, and as Gilbert sat there eating his lunch, thrilling at the loud claps and the darting lightning, the water would begin to stream over the sill and down the walls. Then Annie would have to be hastily called, and, with many ejaculations she would throw her apron over her head, and rush out with a dish-pan to bail out the hollow. Gilbert would stand on a chair and see dimly through rain-streaming panes, this huge slopping figure, throwing pails of water into the path. But ordinarily nothing happened in the dining-room. Sometimes in the summer, an odious snail or two would come out of the walls and leave his track across the worn carpet. In a vast closet were stored rows of jellies which Garna had put up, and which Gilbert and Olga would sometimes get a taste of, for a treat. Behind the dining-room was the cellar, gratefully warm in winter with its glowing furnace, and cool in summer with its whitewashed walls. Gilbert loved to spend long summer afternoons there watching Annie turn the ice-cream freezer, and waiting anxiously until the top was taken off to be tested, and you got a taste of the fresh churned cream, or licked the dasher when it was all over. Or sometimes, in winter while Annie shovelled coal into the furnace, Gilbert stood fearfully by and saw the blackish flame shoot up through the new coal. But on the whole, the basement was not a pleasant place. The furnace, so hot when you stood by it, sent only feeble currents of air up to the little registers that opened into the vast rooms above. And always, the year round, there was that musty dining-room to descend into three times a day, with its old frayed chairs, its uncertain carpet, its stained brown walls.

Waggoner 1920-1921

Nor did the creatures who inhabited the basement attract him. Annie changed her guise, but not her nature. And she scarcely changed her guise. If his mother had ever had a servant in the back-street, Gilbert did not remember it. But in Garna's house one naturally had a servant, and one naturally had a Polish girl. Gilbert did not at first understand what Annie was doing in the kitchen, this queer, whitish young woman with many skirts and vast breasts, who gave a sort of growl-smile when you spoke to her, and always started incontinently, with alacrity, to do something without knowing what it was. Gilbert would come in from the garden into the fragrant kitchen on baking-day to look for cookies, and find his mother moving about, with her serious, anxious expression, while Annie sprawled about, cutting up potatoes, and listened to his mother's earnest expostulations. In a few months there would be another Annie; her mouth was perhaps crookeder and her hair yellower, but she would plunge clumsily about in the same old way, and would take up her education not where the other Annie had left off, but precisely in that brutish ignorance where she had begun. To Gilbert's mother, the living and successive tissue of Annie became the absorption of life, but Gilbert was not absorbed in Annies. They were not pretty, and they had a stale odor which Gilbert avoided when he could. He associated the unpleasantness of this strong, docile creature, who relapsed in each transformation to her original brutish ignorance, with the whole unpleasantness of that downstairs floor, the dining-room which remained always the same, whose dull squalor nobody ever did anything to take away, for which Gilbert could not do anything, and for which perhaps nothing could be done.

Upstairs, Gilbert liked Garna's house better. The front parlor was a vast and cavernous room, the mysteries of which Gilbert penetrated only slowly. The back parlor was much more comprehensible. Here the sun shone in, and people sat and lived. When you entered the front parlor, you involuntarily lowered your voice, and you moved around subdued, as if someone had died there. Garna never opened the windows, and the shutters of the bay which looked towards the east were always kept tightly closed. But in the back parlor on bright winter days you sent the shade flying up to the top, and let the sun stream in over the floor all the way to the monster of a horsehair-covered sofa which stretched along the wall.

Horsehair made you feel almost as puckery as matting to touch it,

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and, besides, you could not climb up its slippery sides very easily. And once you were perched up there, you began to slide and slide until you would fall in a heap ignominiously off that ungainly and inhospitable bulk of a sofa. So you would go over and sit at Garna's feet, as she rocked slowly in her great chair, which you must never tip too far back for fear of the grandfather's clock that stood in the corner behind it. The clock had a loud and lovely bell which struck the hours. Gilbert could always tell when it was going to strike, for a minute or two before the hour there was a sharp click. Then a little later would begin a vast rumbling from the very chest of the old clock, as if it were taking a long, deep breath for its pealing song. When Gilbert was in the room, he always stopped and listened for the whole long satisfactory performance. It was slow, it was prepared, it was beautiful, and when Garna got a clock for the dining-room which rattled off a quick little tinkle of a stroke, Gilbert despised it, and would have covered his ears if he had not thought it would be silly.

Upstairs the rooms were just as vast. There was Mother's room, into which the sunlight poured, and which was the warmest in winter, though you took turns rushing to the register to dress where it was warm, before washing in the cold water of the wash-bowl. Just off from Mother's room was a little room, with nothing in it but a huge bed, where Olga and Gilbert slept, and a dresser, in which Gilbert's clothes were kept. On the wall were two old pictures, one representing a donkey in the midst of illimitable and ineffable summer pastures, and marked, "Everything Lovely!" the other showing him in the blizzard before a locked stable-door, with "Nobody loves me!" Against the tall window, at the foot of the bed, were rows and rows of shelves, on which stood flower-pots all winter long, geraniums and begonias, and heliotrope plants, so that they could catch the full warmth of the winter sun and keep green for summer, when Mother took them out of the pot and put them out in rows in the garden again. The window was almost smothered in rich greenery, and sometimes when Gilbert would wake up early on a winter morning, when the light was just beginning to come through the leaves, he would find that the shelves had become a black silhouetted tracery of amazing figures. Queer outlandish heads,—fierce dragomans with pipes in their mouths, Chinamen with queues, policemen with round helmets, or animals like Gilbert had seen at the Zoo—

camels with misshapen humps, elephants with long trunks, the head of a lion. It was very startling to wake up, lying on one's back and gazing out where this faint light appeared in the crevices between these weird figures. The pleasant green plants with which they had gone to bed had given place to queer apparitions. Yet they must be plants. But how could plants look so terrifyingly like heads. Everywhere he looked there appeared a bristling, clear shape. The window was a vast tracery of strangeness. Gilbert was never quite sure how real they were, and he was always grateful when the advancing light gradually brought out the greenness of the leaves, and finally threw them into relief, so that the menacing head would finally dissolve into the utterly meaningless juncture of two geranium blossoms, and the elephant trunk became a familiar begonia front. Then he was cheered, and he wondered how he had ever seen anything else. No wildest forcing of his imagination could make him see the things he had seen.

It was in this room that Gilbert's mother put the children to bed every night, and then took out the lamp to her room, leaving the door just slightly ajar, so they would not be afraid. Everything was so cosy and comfortable during the undressing. Then would come the frightening thought, "Perhaps this comforting presence is going to be withdrawn!" For sometimes you would wake up suddenly with a little clutch at the heart. The dim light would be burning through the crack of the door, but there would be a vast stillness. You knew that the house was empty, that somehow it was the middle of a night that would never end, and everybody, Garna, Mother, and Annie, had gone off to some distant muffled cavern and would never come again. Olga, sleeping in a little round ball at your side, her eyes seraphically closed, was of no avail. The light burned steadily on, only deepening the terror of eternity, of being lost. Should you call? What would be the use? They were infinitely far away, in a sort of Buddha-like trance. So you cried a little, and fell off asleep.

Or if you did not go to sleep, you waited dumbly, and, after æons of time, you heard an unmistakable door close softly downstairs, and in a minute Mother was looking in at you, to see if you were safe. And you said, "Mother!" in a half-choking voice, while great waves of relief and happiness surged through you, and you went sound asleep. So Gilbert got in the habit of asking his mother

every night whether she was going out. And what assurance and peace there was when she said she was not. He was safe, no matter how long the night lasted.

In Gilbert's new house, you could go upstairs in two ways—the front-stairs, and the back-stairs. The front-stairs were very straight and very long and very steep, and were covered with a thick carpet. They went straight down to a little narrow hall and the front door. The back-stairs were crooked and narrow and covered with oil-cloth. They ran down to a little passageway which connected the back parlour with the "side-door," right at the opening of the dark, steep flight that went down into the dining-room. All these regions and passages in Gilbert's house had names. Gilbert soon learned that he must never go down the front-stairs, but must always use the back ones. But one unfortunate day, his cousin George, who was eight, showed him the delights of sliding down banisters, and Gilbert, although he could never walk down the front-stairs without a feeling of the most awful guilt, let himself be seduced into this new and amazing adventure. The rapturous slide down the long, straight, polished wood was so safe and gave him such a thrill that he tried it again and again. But Olga, who by this time was all of five years old, insisted on riding too, and threatened so instant and tumultuous a devastation of tears, that Gilbert and George, in a panic at being discovered, held her up and, having adjusted her little legs and cautioned her as to the way one let one's fingers slide along the slippery rail, let her go.

Now there was attached to the wall by a bracket a lamp, which Gilbert's legs just cleared, although he was always conscious of a fine potential crash. But as Olga went slipping down the rail, it was inevitable that she should choose just that place to fall off, which Gilbert had all the morning been thrillingly avoiding. She fell floppily into the hall, carrying the lamp-shade with her, and making a crash which brought Mother and Annie from the kitchen and Garna from her room above. Then there were tears and scoldings in a great flood, and a few reluctant whacks; George was sent home, and the banisters were never slidden on again, at least not by Olga. Gilbert used them only as a special treat to himself and only in his most unwatched moments. It was one instance where his fiercely clutching guilt melted away before the thrill of that slide.

Gilbert's house, however, afforded few excitements. Garna's big room you did not often enter, though you might on Sunday while she was putting on her veil and bonnet to take you to church. Gilbert did not care very much how the rest of the family got to church, but it was one of the most important things in his life that he should go with Garna. At nine o'clock the church-bell would begin to ring, gayly, quickly, sometimes the long peals almost falling over each other in their eagerness. Then it would stop, with a final long echo. Now the whole town knew that it was Sunday. Then at ten o'clock the great bell would ring again, not quite so gayly nor so quickly, to let people know that there would be church that day. Then at twenty minutes after ten the bell would begin its real earnestness,—slow and solemn strokes, each one ringing its full sonorous note and dying away before the next one began.

At the first stroke of the ten-o'clock bell, Gilbert would rush to Garna's room, where he would find her putting on her black silk dress and little lace collar. Her black bonnet with its long crêpe veil, which Gilbert soon learned meant that grandfather was dead, would be spread out on the bed. When the last bell began to ring, and Garna had not yet put on her bonnet, an icy fear gripped Gilbert's heart. They would be late! The maddening slowness with which Garna put the last touches to her bonnet used to send Gilbert into a delirium of anxiety. Finally they were out on the elm-shaded streets, Gilbert fairly tugging and straining to get them there before service began. Mother and Olga were always late, but that was because Olga cried. He could abandon them. He did not know what would happen to Garna and him if they were late, but he felt that it would be something namelessly awful.

But they were never late. They would sit there in the pew several minutes while the organ played and the great bell boomed outside, up in the tower. Then the minister would come in, and a sense of security and peace would steal over Gilbert, listening to the hymn and looking up at Garna, so glossy and placid next him in the pew.

In prayer-time, Gilbert would have liked to put his head down on the pew-rail in front of him, just as Garna and all the other people did, but he could not reach it. So he had to be content with ducking his head into his hand, and holding his eyes very tightly shut until he heard the "Amen" which sent them all upright again. Why

people had to conceal their faces while they prayed Gilbert did not know, but it gave him a very solemn feeling to keep his eyes closed, and an even more solemn one to open them surreptitiously and look over the wilderness of bent backs.

The ceiling was very far away, and very blue, with queer indented squares that shot out reddish lines. Out of it came two enormous chandeliers of brass, with a ring of lights around, which were sometimes lighted on a dark day and made a chain of dancing lamp-light. There were galleries running down each side of the church, held up by slender white pillars. Outside, just at the top of the pillars, ran a narrow ledge. Gilbert's imagination would perform perilous adventures along that ledge. You would walk along, along, and around the back and up the other side, dizzily perched above the congregation, clinging to the brass rail, and you would come to the choir behind the minister's desk. From the ledge to the choir was a gap of a few feet, but Gilbert saw himself jumping it, and his heart would beat faster. And then he would return painfully, exhilaratedly, around that ledge, holding on so tightly.

When Gilbert got tired of this play he would look up at the strange figures that were fastened to the under side of the ledge. They looked like playing-cards, little square raised blocks marked with black points, at regular intervals down the gallery. Gilbert sometimes imagined that they were really cards, and that a hooded figure moving down the aisles would touch them with a wand, and they would lose their frozen state and fall to the floor. From where Gilbert sat, lines went out from him in all directions: lines of the pews, lines of the aisle ahead which went along under the gallery, angles of the walls, lines of the windows. Sometimes, as his gaze wandered around the church, the line of a pillar would coincide with the line of a window, and Gilbert would hold them together, getting a sudden satisfaction out of holding them in coincidence, and letting them go reluctantly, only when his eye would mount to the queer people in the gallery, whose bonnets and eyes and noses you could just see over the brass railing.

Sometimes in the summer when Uncle Marcus's family was away, Garna and Gilbert sat in their pew at the back of the gallery, a pew that was as big as a house, with great arm-chairs and cushions for your feet. In front of you was the clock, the face of which you could not see, for it looked out straight towards the minister, but

whose ticking you could hear. Gilbert felt very public and self-conscious when he sat there, under the high ceiling, with two long arms of the gallery, crowded with its two tiers of people, stretching away on either hand. Yet it was all very august, and religion seemed to have attained its most solemn worthiness when you sat in Uncle Marcus's pew.

The minister was very large and very loud, and he wore a white tie. Gilbert did not altogether like him when he laid his moist and unctuous hand on Gilbert's head, as he sometimes did in Sunday School. For after you had gone to church with Garna, you let her go home, and you stayed to Sunday School. You went into an old brick building, which stood a little distance from the church. The light poured through the big windows, and you could see the lilac-bushes outside. The room swam with very fluffy little girls, but when they had sung several hymns, Gilbert and half a dozen other little boys were shepherded into a corner and sat on their little chairs in a circle around Miss Fogg, while she taught them the lesson for the day. Gilbert always knew his golden text, and he was often the only little boy who did. Miss Fogg would smile at him, which would make him uncomfortable, and he would be glad when they all stood up and marched around the room to drop their pennies into a basket which Miss Fogg held while they sang:

"Hear the pennies dropping,
Listen while they fall,
Every one for Jesus.
He will have them all."

Gilbert did not doubt that Jesus would have them all, and he was not in the least interested in what Jesus did with them when he had them. It was part of the ceremony, to which you resigned yourself unquestioningly, and when the penny-dropping was over, Gilbert ran home as fast as he could go, to the wonderful dinner of roast beef and potatoes that Mother had for them on Sundays.

Sunday School was a neutral, colorless event in his life. Every Sunday as they left the Sunday School, each child would receive a little leaflet; those who had known their golden texts would get a card with a golden star on it. Gilbert always cried a little if he lost his card while running home, and he cherished his leaflet for a day

or two. But he never tried to read it, and he soon mislaid his golden star. Good boys, after they had gotten a prodigious number of golden stars, were each supposed to receive as a reward a Bible all of his own. But when Gilbert was seven years old, Garna gave him a beautiful thick black Bible, with his name—Gilbert Shotwell Harden—stamped on the cover in golden letters. Besides, it did not appeal to him to grub along for a prize. Far better to have things, glorious, imposing, come to you out of the blue sky! Once Aunt Shotwell promised him fifty cents if he would learn the Westminster Catechism, but Gilbert never got farther than "The chief end of man is to glorify God and enjoy him forever." Something obscure, unconscious, revolted in him at the base commerciality of the transaction, and although he did not question that this was the chief end of man indeed, he did not want to be bribed into proclaiming it.

Things were better in the stories he learned from Miss Fogg: that Adam had eaten the apple and been expelled from Eden; that Noah had built and taken his cruise in the ark; that Abraham had offered up Isaac, and Jacob served seven years; that Moses had led the Israelites into the wilderness, and Joshua made the sun stand still; that David should have loved Jonathan and killed Goliath; that Samson should have been shorn of his strength, and Esther gotten Haman hanged higher than the housetops;—all in order to teach little boys and girls to be good, to obey their fathers and mothers and go regularly to church and Sunday School, seemed to Gilbert entirely plausible, at least as it was expounded by the patient and smiling Miss Fogg. He read the stories in his new Bible, but he did not wonder much about them.

Every now and then there was a temperance lesson, when Miss Fogg would horrify the little boys with her pictures of the evils of strong drink. Gilbert had never seen any spirituous liquors, and he could hardly identify them in his mind, but through the vivid and scandalized exhortations of the minister and Miss Fogg, Gilbert conceived liquor as a dark, evil-smelling brew, a sort of religious urine, which foul and wicked men put into their stomachs, so that at once homes were wrecked, and mothers and children brought to abject want. The process by which this result arrived was vague in his mind, but the earliest genuine crime of which he had knowledge and felt with a shuddering realization of the existence of sin was this crime of entering a saloon, or of drinking down wine or beer.

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One of the golden texts was a special favorite with Gilbert and Olga, and she would declaim it with great *éclat*, in a broad, free-verse style:

"Wine is a maw-aw-ker,
Strong drink is ray-ay-ging,
And whoever is deceived there-by-y,
Is not—wise!"

But sin, on the whole, was a very vague idea to Gilbert. He early learned that God had sent His Son Jesus down to earth to save us from our sins, and that this was the central fact of life. Garna told him about it, and so did Miss Fogg, when they later had lessons in the New Testament. We must all love God very much, and especially Jesus, who had done so much for us. And in the solemn Sunday afternoons, when Gilbert was told to take his Bible and sit by the window in the back-parlor and read a chapter, he would sometimes wonder if he loved God enough, or if he loved Jesus. God was a majestic-old gentleman with a white beard, reclining on white cumulus clouds, and Jesus he knew equally well as a young man in an archaic blue robe, holding a lamb in one arm, and followed by others. He had seen their pictures long ago, and whenever either of them was mentioned, these images popped into his mind, faintly colored by a sense of awe, as in the case of God, and of tenderness, as in the case of Jesus. But did he love them? The pastor was certainly a very poor caricature of God, and yet with his beard and square head and loud words, there must be a faint resemblance. Gilbert certainly did not like him.

Much more nearly like God was his father's father, whom he had once been taken to see and whom he remembered now as a white-haired, white-bearded man, very solemn, and yet with something cold and repellent about him whenever Gilbert had touched him. Gilbert did not feel that he loved this God, and yet he knew that he ought to, that it was the most important thing in life that he could do. So he would sit there and try to screw his heart into an attitude of loving. He would grow very serious and tighten his muscles, and fix his thoughts on the majesty reclining on the white cloud, and, pretty soon, he would feel that indeed he now loved God, and he would be kept from sin. Jesus, who was tenderer, he might have found easier to love, but for the fact of those lambs. Gilbert had never seen

young men carrying lambs, and the picture, whose authenticity he did not question, aroused no emotion within him. But after he had come to love God, he tightened his heart towards the benignant being in the blue robe.

He was always present, because before every meal they would all put down their heads, so that they breathed upon their plates, and they would ask Jesus to bless their food. Sometimes Gilbert would say it, sometimes Olga, and the food unblessed would have tasted bad in their mouths. Gilbert would have had a vague presentiment of something evil. Did Garna and Mother love God? Garna must, because every day she would put on her gold-rimmed spectacles and read a chapter in her Bible, and mother would kneel down with Gilbert and Olga at night while they said their prayers, and often murmur something fervently with them. The prayers, they understood, were addressed directly to God in heaven, and were necessary if you were to show your gratitude to the Heavenly Father and ensure for yourself a peaceful and secure night. You asked God also to bless all those people you were fond of, and you knew that if they should die before they woke, their souls also would be taken to Heaven with yours.

If it was only with painful effort that Gilbert in his early days of church and Sunday School loved God and Jesus, whom did he love? Did he love Mother? He did not know. He loved her very much at night when he felt her protecting presence in the house, but in the daytime she was a strange being who did not seem interested in Gilbert and Olga. She spent most of her time with little brother, or, if he were asleep, she would be lying stretched across the foot of the bed, with her face in her hands. Often there were tears in her eyes, and if Gilbert wanted her to do something for him, she would say piteously that she was not well. There were no more walks on the village green, but this did not make any difference to Gilbert, for the wonderful yard in which Garna's house stood was a region that could never be explored or exhausted.

The one person that Gilbert knew he loved was Garna. You could not always see her, for she would be shut up in her room; but when you were let in, how inexhaustible she was, how comfortable you felt, playing about on the floor while Garna sat always by the window, sewing, always sewing, looking so wise and jolly and good out of her gold-rimmed spectacles. Garna was always the same,

and always good to be with and look upon. Gilbert loved to sit in her lap, and touch her hair, brushed to such silky smoothness and parted in the middle. As she bent over, he would run both hands back over it from her forehead, and laugh as she laughed and pretended to arrange it again.

Gilbert liked to have Garna all to himself, and it was fortunate that Olga was not much interested in Garna. She did not seem to half appreciate her or her wonderful room: But once in a while she would take a perverse desire to come in with Gilbert when he went to see Garna. Olga would have to be prevented with all his weight and force. How could he stand so outrageous an invasion of his rights? And Olga would probably hit him, concentrating all her round little pugnacity into one stout blow, and Gilbert would hit back, and Olga would scream, and Mother would come running, and there would be many tears, and Eden would be spoiled, if not altogether denied him, for that afternoon. On the very threshold, Olga, who did not really care to be with Garna, had ruined his day with her! Hateful little Olga! And all the time, Garna would be inside, behind the closed door, serene, unheeding, letting her daughter, Gilbert's mother, settle the whole affair, as far away as if she were in Pampeluna. Gilbert felt the perversity of Fate, the inexorable aloofness of the gods, the fragility of happiness. Going eagerly to taste this sweet exhilaration of an afternoon with Garna, the cup, without any warning whatever, would be fatally dashed from his lips. But he could not have it shared with Olga!

Between Garna's chair and the window was a high, chintz-coloured box which opened into a voluminous cavern of sheets and white things. In the corner just behind Garna's chair was the tall secretary-desk, with its big doors above that opened on shelves full of books, and its heavy writing-lid which folded down and rested horizontally on two supports that pulled out on each side. You could sit on the high chintz-box and write on the secretaire. Gilbert thought this was one of the most satisfactory spots in the whole world. At your right was the window looking down through the black-walnut trees to the street below; just behind you sat Garna, busily knitting or sewing; you had all the flat, shiny surface of the lid to make your puzzles on, or practise writing, or draw on; your legs hung down over the chintz-box, high above the ground; you were shut in to the most delicious privacy. At the back of the sec-

retaire were innumerable compartments and pigeon-holes in which Garna kept her letters and papers; there were old diaries and account-books, which Gilbert puzzled over, and one compartment Garna gave Gilbert for his very own, so that he could keep his pencils and paper there, and anything he chose, safe for ever from the depredations of the marauding Olga, who seemed to Gilbert, whenever he thought of her at all from his safe retreat, as a very imp of lawlessness, of restless and devastating mischief. Sometime, to make sure that no one interrupted him, he would silently turn the keys in the doors. But Garna did not like that very much, and it was awkward if Mother or Aunt Nan really came and wanted to come in, and Garna had to wonder how the doors could ever have become locked.

In the summer afternoons Garna would take her waist off, and sit sewing in her bare arms. Gilbert liked to lean over and rub his face against the expanse of cool flesh, lay his head on the cool shoulder, and listen to Garna's stories of when she was a little girl. Gilbert learned about her father's house in Burnham, which he should some day see, but it was a long distance from where they lived now; about his mill-pond and his mill, where great mahogany logs that came from the West Indies were sawed up for furniture; about the canal that was dug, when she was a little girl, through their very front yard, and on which they saw the very first boat sail grandly by, the grandfather of those boats that Gilbert had loved to watch from the porch of the house in the back-street, and which he had almost forgotten now that he had come to live with Garna.

So he would lean there against her arm, stroking her plump elbow with its dimples that so fascinated him, and listening to her stories until, in the drowsy summer air, he sank away indistinctly, and knew nothing until he woke up towards supper-time on Garna's high bed. Every now and then, as a great distinction and event, Gilbert would be allowed to sleep with Garna. How different and solemn it was from any other sleep! When Gilbert said good-night to Garna in her big chair in the back-parlour, it was with a "I'm going to sleep with you to-night!" Then he would get, not into the hard little bed with Olga, but into the great feathery soft bed in Garna's room. He would sink off to sleep in billows and oceans of soft pillows and sheets. Along towards morning he would half wake, perhaps, and there would be the huge, comforting, dear presence of Garna filling

the bed beside him, as he lay pressed against her warm night-gown. And when he woke again, Mother would be there standing by the side of the bed, and she would whisk him off to her room to be dressed. And life would go on as before.

Aunt Nan seemed to love Garna as much as Gilbert did. And she liked Gilbert. Often, on summer days, she would take him up to her room in the third-story, a region to which Gilbert never ventured alone, for there were queer, pitchy-black closets and alcoves that led far back under the sloping roof, and contained trunks and boxes, in which and behind which you never knew what menacing forces of evil might be hidden. At the top of the stairs was a little hall, lighted by a skylight, through which you saw the blue sky. Aunt Nan's room was shaped like an L, but the ceiling on one side ran down so steeply that Gilbert could stand against the wall and touch the line where it joined the ceiling. Aunt Nan would fix up a pallet on the floor, soft and comfortable, and on hot days Gilbert would roll half-naked on it, while Aunt Nan rubbed his hot arms with a sweet-smelling balsam. Then she would sit and read a great shiny new book, which Gilbert spelled out as "Psychology. James." She had several books on shelves over her desk, and a great bunch of programs stuck together on an iron hook that hung on the wall. In the winter Aunt Nan was not in the house. Mother said she was a teacher, and lived in New York.

Aunt Nan was very tall and very slender and very straight, and she had very black hair that came over her forehead in a kind of bang. She always wore black and white dresses, and she always had a bright fierceness about her that Gilbert liked. She was several years younger than Mother, and she was very proud. There was a stiff exhilaration in her walk and in her laugh that daunted Gilbert a little, but made him like to be with her. Sometimes she would put the tennis-net across the green lawn and play with a neighbor, darting so swiftly, like a long black bird, across the green, hitting the ball so straight and true, and blazing so fiercely with her black eyes when she missed, that Gilbert sat enthralled, motionless, until the set was over and they went in to supper. On those days he would help her mark the court, going to the little barn and watching her fill the marker with white powdery lime, and then helping her push it over the closely-mown grass. The long summer days were full of Aunt Nan. She loved the garden, with its flower-beds, and she

loved to see the paths all clipped and weeded and raked. Once a week, a black man would come from somewhere, and spend the whole day with Aunt Nan, mowing the lawn, digging the vegetable garden, and weeding the flowers. That was a glorious day for Gilbert and for Aunt Nan. How much there was to be done! They all seemed to be wrestling with the whole yard, to turn it up, to bring it to a bright, shiny newness. At the end of the day, Gilbert would walk about the garden on the gravelly paths, with Aunt Nan to survey their handiwork. She would be immensely contented. Her bright black eyes would soften; she would be weary and her hands would be dirty, but Gilbert would feel the peace that radiated from her at the sight of this freshly burnished garden. The grass would be smooth like a carpet, the flower-beds and the vegetable-garden all dark and tumbled with their upturned earth. The paths would be straight brown indented tracks, or, where they went around the house, beautifully curved tracks, with the marks of the rake on the fine earth where George had worked it over. During the week the grass would grow longer, the weeds shoot up in the flower-beds, the paths become bedraggled at the edges, the grass grow up rank on the lawns. But soon Saturday would come with George, and the fine renovation would take place all over again.

Aunt Nan was neat and quick in her movements. She had a cold scorn for dirty faces and dirty hands, and Gilbert sometimes became a little weary trying to satisfy her demands. He was always a little intimidated by her, but at the same time fascinated by her vibrancy, her restless passion. He loved to see her coming towards him, because he knew that she would snatch him away to something interesting. But he was a little fearful, too; subdued by that decisiveness that made him realize how little what he wanted would count. She did not kiss or fondle Gilbert much. She would take him on her lap and put her arms around him.

Mother was never like that. She did not seem to know what she wanted. Every incident was a crisis. Gilbert found that he and Olga could resist her by delaying. Dirty faces could be grudgingly and slowly cleaned. One could come in the utmost disapproving reluctance when one was called. Mother was always distressed that you did not obey her; she was always distressed about what to do with you. She would implore you to be good, and you would be good with a certain chilly haughtiness, because it seemed somewhat

humiliating to see Mother so distressed and uncertain. Olga did not usually obey, but kicked and screamed. Gilbert soon got the habit of ignoring his mother's expressed desires and wearing out her decisiveness. Then he would be left alone to follow his own desires.

That yard, which Aunt Nan loved so much, was for Gilbert a domain, a principality. It was years before he had really explored it thoroughly or searched out all its delights. At first it was a rich and bountiful collection of all the things that Gilbert had missed in the back-street. He did not know that he had missed them, but now that he had found them, something down very deep in him told him that this was what his restlessness and sadness had craved.

You rushed out the side-door—for the front door was just as heavily interdicted as the front stairs—and you tumbled into a bed of myrtles and wistaria which climbed out of the flower-bed in thick stalks and grew steadily over the corner of the house. Across the path were two tall pine trees, whose branches brushed Gilbert's shutter by his bed when the wind blew loud. Beyond the trees lay the green, unbroken lawn, covered with velvety grass that even the lawn-mower could not keep from growing thick and soft like a carpet. The lawn went straight up towards the neighbor's fence, but just before it reached there it turned into a long flower-bed, with rose-bushes and tangled flowery vines that climbed over and pretended that there was no fence there at all. To the right, and up near the street corner of the yard were three more lordly pines set in a triangle, which Gilbert had promptly named "Three Trees Grove." The floor was covered with needles. It was shady and spacious, almost as big as Gilbert's room. It could be turned into a house, or a shop or a church, at a moment's notice. The big trunks stretching up above Gilbert's head gave it an air of delightful majesty, and he could not play there enough with Olga and Cousin Ethel.

At the other end of the broad lawn were the grape-arbors, six or seven lines of them, where you walked between the overflowing vines and looked longingly at the green bunches which took endless æons, all through the long golden summer, to ripen, while Gilbert went every day to examine them. Behind that was the barn, from which the horses and carriage had vanished, though when Grandfather was alive, Garna told him, they had had their horses and Aunt Nan had ridden one of them, and so had Uncle Rob, who was far off in Texas now. Gilbert could see traces of the carriage road which had led

out through the side-gate to the side-street, but which was now all grass-grown. The barn was now full of rakes and hoes and wheelbarrows, but there were deep bins where still remained a peck or two of oats and a measure, and there was a manger which swung back and forth from the stall to the bin, so you could fill it and then turn it in to the horse. Gilbert wished that there were still horses to play with, but it was fun turning the manger and making Olga and Ethel pretend to be horses.

If you went on beyond the barn you came to a clump of currant and gooseberry bushes which ran out in a thin line to the fence, which by this time had lost its rose-bushes and become a prickly tangle of blackberries. Enclosed by the blackberries and the currants was the broad expanse of the vegetable garden, with corn in summer that Gilbert could get quite lost in, and an amazing variety of good vegetables to eat. The vegetable garden ran up to Uncle Marcus's barn and his garden. Straight down back of Garna's house, through the middle of the yard, ran a path, part way through a grape-arbor of its own, and then past the currant bushes. At the end of the garden it joined a path in Uncle Marcus's yard. Along the foot of the path, where it passed the garden, was a row of rhubarb, and on the other side Aunt Nan's sweet-peas, which she planted every spring. On the other side of the path was an open meadow where the grass was not cut, and where Gilbert sometimes lay on cool summer days and looked up at great white clouds floating past in the blue sky. Nearer the house you came to a wilderness of fruit-trees, pears of all kinds and apples, and as you approached the street the yard broke into flower-beds and shrubs and bushes. Close to the house grew lilies-of-the-valley, and a curious ribbon-grass which Aunt Nan could take between her fingers and blow shrill whistles on. Along the path which went past the dining-room window were beds of pink and white peonies and tall white lilies which had a smell so sweet that Gilbert felt almost faint when he touched them. And along the whole side of the yard was a beautiful japonica-hedge, with its white and red flowers in the spring, which turned into sweetly smelling green balls in the summer. There were great maples interspersed in the hedge, that threw down their keys in the spring. And all along the front of the yard, close to the house, ran a white wooden fence just within which was a line of graceful black-walnut trees, with their thin green clustered leaves and the green nuts which fell

in heaps on the ground. Aunt Nan and Gilbert would collect them in sacks and put them in the barn. There they would grow all black, so that you could strip off the covering and find the crinkled nutshell within. Then you cracked them on a stone.

The yard was wonderful to Gilbert. The winter was one long torpor when, as he played with his blocks in the great stretch of sunlight in Mother's room, the days passed almost in a dream. It was only when spring came, and he could run about and see the buds and the flowers come out one after another, that he felt alive again. And it was good in the endless summer days to have so much to attend to. He could be playing in Three Trees Grove, and yet have running in an undercurrent of his mind the sense of the garden or the japonica hedge, or the manger in the barn. He could go down to the cherry-tree to see if the cherries were ripe, or to the currant-bushes, or he could prick his fingers on the rose-bushes, or get himself stuck in the gum of the pine-trees. The yard was a world, and only very dimly did he imagine anything beyond it. What his mother did in the kitchen or about the house only very dimly concerned him. What they had to live on never entered his mind. His sorrows were concerned almost entirely with the rebellions of Olga, or the calamities of weather which would keep them all home from a walk to the kind lady who lived up the street and gave them cookies when they went to see her. Or the hornets and yellow-jackets. Sometimes on very hot days, when Mother kept them in the darkened back parlor and the big clock ticked menacingly, insistently at them, and Gilbert felt sleepy and could not go to sleep, the tedium vitæ would overwhelm him in a great drenching wave. He was suddenly conscious of time, endlessly flowing and yet somehow dreadfully static. Nothing was ever going to happen again; he was as if alive in a tomb. The flies buzzed; the clock ticked; Mother was taking an exhausted nap; Aunt Nan and Garna were away for a vacation. The world was a great vacuum with nothing to experience and nothing to do.

And if a summer afternoon could produce so appalling a sense of eternity, what must heaven be like, where you went so infallibly when you were dead? Either because lovely Garna and mild Miss Fogg had kept Gilbert from the terrors of hell, or it was his natural ego, it never occurred to him that he was not destined for heaven, or that there was any way of avoiding it. And the thought of

eternal life seemed to fuse itself with the long and empty summer afternoon. The *tedium vitæ* got transmuted into the colossal ennui of heaven. Not as a pearly municipality of golden streets and white-robed choirs did Gilbert imagine heaven, but always in the guise of those white clouds on which God rode. He saw himself clearly, seated infinitely high above the earth, to which he should never be able to come again. Perhaps there was the intimation of a harp, but what seized Gilbert's imagination was the vast emptiness of the space around him, the disorientation of everything. Time and space were no longer fluid and mobile, but frozen; and in the hot, sticky afternoon, his slightly feverish body, all alert and sensitive at every pore of time that dripped past him, would be terribly conscious of this horror that awaited him, of this immobile time in empty space. It was not the dark or stillness that he feared. On the contrary, he saw this future state as floating in the clearest, most luminous light. On certain days, when he happened to look at the sky, he would see just that pale infinite blue into which you could look on and on and never reach the end. When it was really blue or cloudy, it curved comfortingly over you, near and definite like a bowl. But when it was of a certain paleness, the bowl seemed to have been removed and you looked through, out into nothingness. And if in this nothingness there were white majestic clouds floating, that looked solid as if they could bear you away, then over Gilbert would sweep again this ennui of heaven, lost and forgotten perhaps since that last afternoon in the darkened parlor. And a vague feeling of homelessness and of fear would fall upon him. His play would flag until the clouds drifted away again and he forgot that they had come.

The first break in Gilbert's world came when his mother decided that he and Olga ought to go to school. Gilbert was seven years old, and when his mother told him rather worriedly about it, he felt at first rather pleased at the idea of something so important. What would they teach him? Mother said Miss Waldron would teach him. He knew how to read and write and he could spell all the words he wrote. He read all the books he was given and sometimes looked into Hawthorne's *Wonder Tales*, and read a page or two. When he went back for the book, however, he would forget where he had left off. So he would read a page anywhere. What did it matter? He read his Bible in the same haphazard way. He knew

his multiplication table, and he liked to recite it. And he knew all about the calendar and the hymn-book. Most of these things he had known since he was four or five, and what good did they do him?

But in the morning he liked taking Olga by the hand, and leading her out the gate under the big black-walnut trees, and down the street. Mother always kissed them good-bye with such a serious and anxious air that Gilbert felt he was setting out on a genuine mission. At the crossing he would restrain Olga from rushing ahead; then he could carefully look up and down the street to see if there were any horses and wagons coming. Then he would dash across, pulling Olga precipitately behind him. They would go along the upper green, under the great railroad bridge, and come to Miss Waldron's.

To Gilbert the school was an enormous joke. He could not take Miss Waldron seriously. Her tall, bony frame and her sad, fierce eyes touched no springs of affection in him. A lesson or two unlocked all the latent cruelty in him. She was there to teach Gilbert and Olga and the half-dozen other little children who came to the school-room over the kitchen, and she was determined to teach them. She knew that children under seven needed to be taught to read and write and spell and that this was what their parents had sent them to her for. So she gritted her teeth, and came every morning to her hard and bitter work.

But Gilbert by that time had read so many books at home that it seemed absurd that he should be taught to read, and he would rattle through the lesson while the younger children fidgeted and then tried painfully to puzzle it out. Gilbert could spell, too, and he raced through the words, and when he was asked the meaning of words he would say that "retire" meant "go to bed," because he had seen it mean that in a book he had read. And Miss Waldron would say he was a saucy boy, and plead with him to answer nicely. Then he would mimic her, and watch her fight back the temper in her sad, fierce eyes. She would stand him in the corner, with his back to the class, and he would look round and wink at the other children to make them laugh. Miss Waldron's sisters would come up from the kitchen below, where they were baking, and beg Gilbert not to make the teacher so unhappy, and promise him a cookie if he would be good. And Gilbert, drunk with power, would refuse everything, and ride his high horse until the mill-whistles blew twelve o'clock, and they all went home for the day.

SEVEN POEMS

BY E. E. CUMMINGS

I

little tree
little silent Christmas tree
you are so little
you are more like a flower

who found you in the green forest
and were you very sorry to come away?
see i will comfort you
because you smell so sweetly

i will kiss your cool bark
and hug you safe and tight
just as your mother would,
only don't be afraid

look the spangles
that sleep all the year in a dark box
dreaming of being taken out and allowed to shine,
the balls the chains red and gold the fluffy threads,

put up your little arms
and i'll give them all to you to hold.
every finger shall have its ring
and there won't be a single place dark or unhappy

then when you're quite dressed
you'll stand in the window for everyone to see
and how they'll stare!
oh but you'll be very proud

and my little sister and i will take hands
and looking up at our beautiful tree
we'll dance and sing
"Noel Noel"

II

the bigness of cannon
is skilful,

but i have seen
death's clever enormous voice
which hides in a fragility
of poppies. . . .

i say that sometimes
on these long talkative animals
are laid fists of huger silence.

I have seen all the silence
full of vivid noiseless boys

at Roupy
i have seen
between barrages,

the night utter ripe unspeaking girls.

III

Buffalo Bill's
defunct

who used to
ride a watersmooth-silver

stallion

and break onetwothreefourfive pigeonsjustlikethat

Jesus

he was a handsome man

and what i want to know is

how do you like your blueeyed boy
Mister Death

SEVEN POEMS

IV

when god lets my body be

From each brave eye shall sprout a tree
fruit that dangles therefrom

the purpled world will dance upon
Between my lips which did sing

a rose shall beget the spring
that maidens whom passion wastes

will lay between their little breasts
My strong fingers beneath the snow

Into strenuous birds shall go
my love walking in the grass

their wings will touch with her face
and all the while shall my heart be

With the bulge and nuzzle of the sea

V

why did you go
little fourpaws?
you forgot to shut
your big eyes.

where did you go?
like little kittens
are all the leaves
which open in the rain.

little kittens who
are called spring,
is what we stroke
maybe asleep?

do you know? or maybe did
something go away
ever so quietly
when we weren't looking.

VI

when life is quite through with
and leaves say alas,
much is to do
for the swallow, that closes
a flight in the blue;

when love's had his tears out,
perhaps shall pass
a million years
(while a bee doses
on the poppies, the dears;

when all's done and said, and
under the grass
lies her head,
by oaks and roses
deliberated.)

VII

O Distinct
Lady of my unkempt adoration
if I have made
a fragile certain

song under the window of your soul
it is not like any songs
(the singers the others
they have been faithful

SEVEN POEMS

to many things and which
die
i have been sometimes true
to Nothing and which lives

they were fond of the handsome
moon never spoke ill of the
pretty stars and to
the serene the complicated

and the obvious
they were faithful
and which i despise,
frankly

admitting i have been true
only to the noise of worms
in the eligible day
under the unaccountable sun)

Distinct Lady
swiftly take
my fragile certain song
that we may watch together

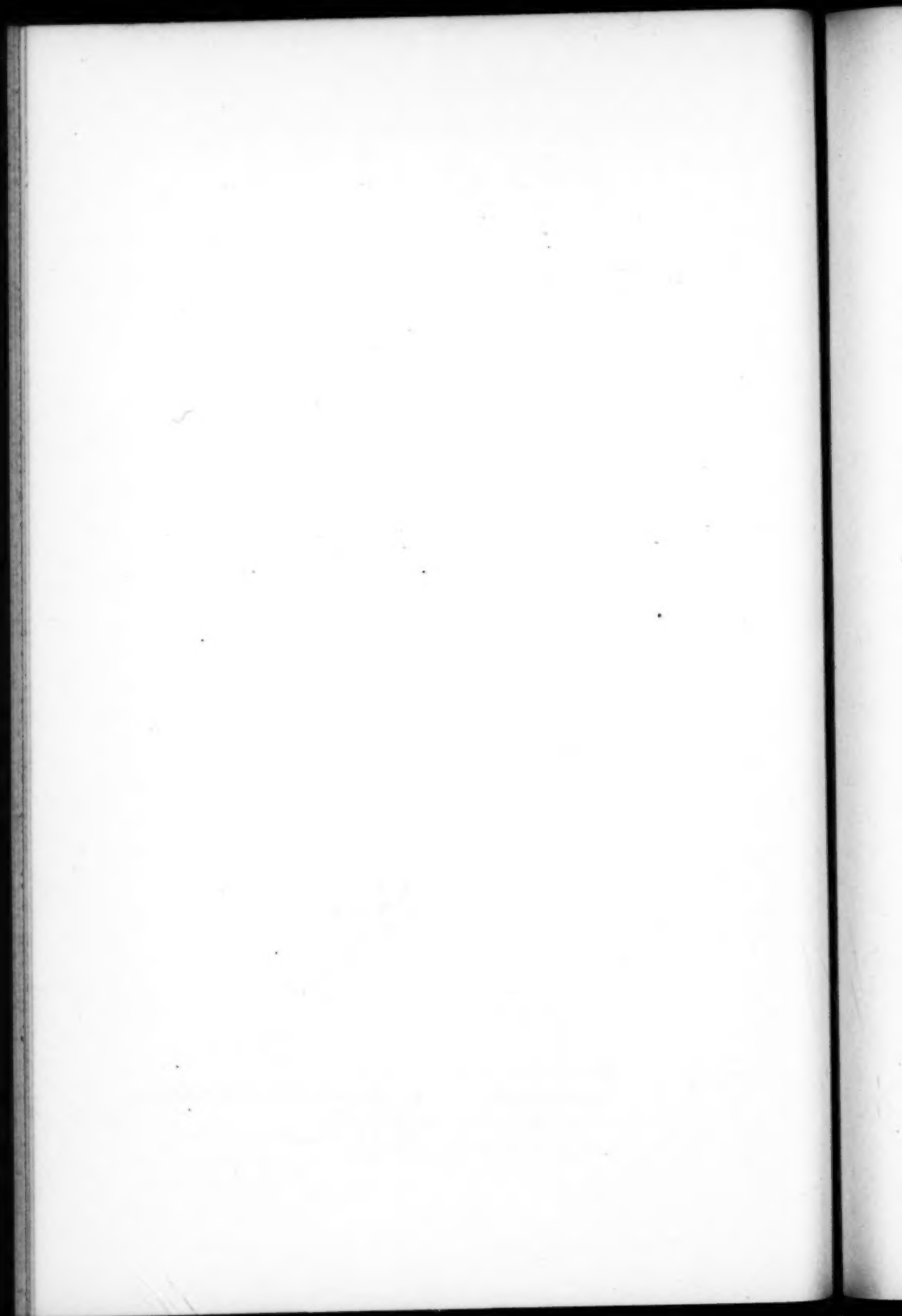
how behind the doomed
exact smile of life's
placid obscure palpable
carnival where to a normal

melody of probable violins dance
the square virtues with the oblong sins
perfectly
gesticulate the accurate

strenuous lips of incorruptible
Nothing under the ample
sun, under the insufficient
day under the noise of worms



I. NATIONAL WINTER GARDEN
BURLESQUE
BY E. E. CUMMINGS





II. NATIONAL WINTER GARDEN
BURLESQUE
BY E. E. CUMMINGS





III. NATIONAL WINTER GARDEN
BURLESQUE
BY E. E. CUMMINGS



IV. NATIONAL WINTER GARDEN
BURLESQUE
BY E. E. CUMMINGS

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CHARLES MARTIN LOEFFLER

BY PAUL ROSENFELD

LEGEND records of Inez de Castro, Queen of Portugal, that she was dethroned and driven into exile by a rival, and that before her husband and her partisans could restore her to kingdom, she had died. But her husband caused her body to be embalmed and borne with him wherever he went. And when finally he had vanquished the pretender, he had the corpse decked in all the regal insignia, had it set upon the throne in the great hall of the palace of the kings of Portugal, and vassals and liegemen summoned to do the homage that had been denied the unhappy queen in her lifetime.

The music of Charles Martin Loeffler is like the dead Inez de Castro on her throne. It, too, is swathed in diapered cloths and hung with gold and precious stones. It, too, is set above and apart from men in a sort of royal state, and surrounded by all the emblems of kingdom. And beneath its stiff and incrustated sheath there lies, as once there lay beneath the jewelled robes and diadem of the kings of Portugal, not a living being, but a corse.

For Loeffler is one of those exquisites whose refinement is unfortunately accompanied by sterility, perhaps even results from it. But for his essential uncreativity, he might well have become the composer uniquely representative of the artistic movement in which the late nineteenth century refinement and exquisiteness manifested itself. No musician, not Debussy even, was better prepared for bringing the symbolist movement into music. Loeffler is affiliated in temper, if not in achievement, with the brilliant band of belated romanticists who adopted as their device the sonnet of Verlaine's beginning:

"Je suis l'empire à la fin de la décadence."

One finds in him almost typically the sensibility to the essences and colours rather more than to the spectacle, the movement, the adventures of things. The nervous delicacy, the widowhood of the spirit, the horror of the times, the mystic paganism, the homesickness for

a tranquil and sequestered and soft-colored land "where shepherds still pipe to their flocks, and nun-like processions of clouds float over bluish hills and fathomless age-old lakes" are eminently present in him. He is in almost heroic degree the spirit forever searching blindly through the loud and garish city, the hideous present, for some vestige, some message from its homeland; finding, some sundown, in the ineffable glamour of rose and mauve and blue through granite piles, "*le souvenir avec le crepuscule.*" He, too, one would guess, has dreamt of selling his soul to the devil, and called upon him, ah, how many terrible nights, to appear, and has sought a refuge from the world in Catholic mysticism and ecstasy. Had it been given him to realize himself in music, we should undoubtedly have had a body of work that would have been the veritable milestones of the route traversed by the entire movement. Would not the "Pagan Poem" have been the musical equivalent of the mystic and sorrowful sensuality of Verlaine? Would not the two rhapsodies "*L'Étang*" and "*La cornemuse*" have transmuted to music the macabre and sinister note of so much symbolist poetry? Should we not have had in "*La Villanelle du Diable*" an equivalent for the black mass and "*Là bas*"; in "*Hora Mystica*" an equivalent for "*En route*"; in the "*Music for Four Stringed Instruments*" a musical "*Sagesse*"? Does not Charles Martin Loeffler, who after writing "*A Pagan Poem*" makes a retreat in a Benedictine monastery, and who, at home in Medford, Massachusetts, teaches the chofisters to sing gregorian chants, recall Joris Karl Huysmans, the "oblat" of La Trappe?

To a limited extent, of course, he has succeeded in fixing the color of the symbolist movement in music. Some of his richer, dreamier songs, some of his finer bits of polishing, his rarer drops of essence, are indeed the musical counterpart of the goldsmith's work, the preciousness of a Gustave Kahn or a Stuart Merrill. But a musical Huysmans, for instance, it was never in his power to become. For he has never possessed the creative heat, the fluency, the vein, the felicity, the power necessary to the task of upbuilding out of the tones of instruments anything so flamboyant and magnificent as the novelist's black and red edifices. He has never been vivid and ingenuous and spontaneous enough a musician even to develop a personal idiom. He has always been hampered and bound. His earlier compositions, the first quartet, the orchestral "*Les viellées de*

l'Ukraine" and "*La bonne chanson*," for instance, are distinctly derivative and uncharacteristic in style. The idiom is derived in part from Fauré, in part from Wagner and other of the romanticists. The quintette has even been dubbed "A musical 'Trip Around the World in Eighty Days.'" Nor is the idiom of his later and more representative period primarily and originally any more characteristic. It never seems to surge quite wholly and cleanly and fairly. The chasing to which it has evidently been subjected cannot quite conceal its descent. The setting of "*La Cloche fêlée*" of Baudelaire, for instance, is curiously Germanic and heavy, for all the subtlety and filigree of the voice and the accompanying piano and viola. And "*Hora Mystica*" and the "*Music for Four Stringed Instruments*," which have a certain stylistic unity, nevertheless reveal the composer hampered by the gregorian and scholastic idiom which he has sought to assimilate.

Nor has he ever had the power to express and objectify himself completely, and achieve vital form. In performance, most of his works shrink and dwindle. The central and sustaining structure, the cathedral which is behind every living composition and manifests itself through it, is in these pieces so vague and attenuated that it fades into the background of the concert-hall, is like gray upon gray. The gems and gold thread and filigree with which this work is sewn tarnish in the gloom. Something is there, we perceive, something that moves and sways and rises and ebbs fitfully in the dim light. But it is a wraithlike thing, and undulates and falls before our eyes like flames that have neither redness nor heat. Even the terrible bagpipe of the "*Clarinet Rhapsody*"; even the cauldron of the "*Pagan Poem*," that transcription of the most sensual and impassioned of Virgil's eclogues, with its mystic dissonant trumpets; even the blasphemies of "*La Villanelle du Diable*," are curiously bloodless and ghostly and unsubstantial. Pages of sustained music occur rarely enough in his work. The lofty, almost metaphysical first few periods, the severe and pathetic second movement of the "*Music for Four Stringed Instruments*"; certain songs like "*Le Son du Cor*," that have atmosphere and a delicate poetry, are distinctly exceptional in this body of work. What chiefly lives in it are certain perfumed phrases, certain eloquent bars, a glowing winy bit of colour here, a velvety phrase for the oboe or the clarinet, a sharp brassy pricking horn-call, a dreamy wandering melody for

the voice there. His music consists of scattered highly polished phrases, hard, exquisite, and cold. He is pre-eminently a *précieux*.

Of the scrupulousness, the fastidiousness, the distinction, even, of Loeffler's work, there can be no question. He is not one of the music-making herd. The subtlety and originality of intention which his compositions almost uniformly display, the unflagging effort to enclose within each of his forms a matter rare and novel and rich, set him forever apart, even in his essential weakness, from the academic and conforming crew. The man who has composed these scores makes at least the gesture of the artist, and comes to music to express a temper original and delicate and aristocratic, disdainful of the facile and the commonplace, a sensibility often troubled and shadowy and fantastic. One cannot doubt the veritableness of his vocation. And he is eminently not one of the pathetic half-educated musicians so common in America. He knows something of musical science; knows how a tonal edifice should be unified; has a sense of the chemistry of the orchestra. He appears familiar with the plainsong, and has based a symphony and portions of a quartet on gregorian modes. Even at a period when the sophisticated and cultivated composer is becoming somewhat less a rarity, his culture is remarkable, his knowledge of literature eclectic: Gogol as well as Virgil has moved him to orchestral works. Above all, he is one of the company of composers, to which a good number of more gifted musicians do not belong, who are ever respectful of their medium, and infinitely curious concerning it.

It is only, that, in seeking to compensate himself for his infecundity, he has fallen into the deep sea of preciosity. Endeavoring by main force to be expressive, to remedy his cardinal defect, to eschew whatever is trite and outworn in the line of the melody, the sequence of the harmonies, to rid himself of whatever is derivative and impersonal and undistinguished in his style, he has become over-anxious, over-meticulous of his diction. Because his phraseology was colorless, he has become a stainer of phrases, a sort of musical euphuist. All his energy, one senses, has gone into the cutting and polishing and shining up and setting of little brightly coloured bits of music, little sharp intense moments. One feels that they have been caressed and stroked, and smoothed and regarded a thousand times; that Loeffler has dwelt upon them and touched them with a sort of narcissistic love. Indeed, it must have been a great labour

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that was expended on the darkening and spicing and sharpening of the style in certain of his orchestral poems; the effort to create a new idiom based on the gregorian modes, to which "Hora Mystica" and the recent work for string quartet, with its antiphonies for violin and cello, bear witness, must in itself have been large. But though in result of all the chasing and hammering on gold, the filing and polishing, the vessel of his art has perhaps become richer and finer, it has not become any fuller. His second period differs from his first only in the fact that in it he has gone from one form of uncreativity to another somewhat more dignified and unusual. The compositions of both periods have, after all, the selfsame lack. His destiny seems to have been inevitable.

And so, in its confused argentry and ghostliness, its crystallization and diaphaneity, his music resembles at times nothing so much as the precious remains and specimens of an extinct planet; things transfixed in cold eternal night, icy and phosphorescent of hue. No atmosphere bathes them. Sap does not mount in them. Should we touch them, they would crumble. This might have been a flower. But now it glistens with crystals of mica and quartz. These are jewels. But their fires are quenched. These candied petals are the passage from the "Music for Four Stringed Instruments" glossed in the score "un jardin des fleurs naïves," while this vial of gemmy green liquid is that entitled "une plaine d'émeraude gardée par des peupliers." The petrified saurian there, whose bones have suffered

"a sea-change
Into something rich and strange"

is the Spanish rhapsody for 'cello; the string of steely beads the setting of the "To Helen" of Poe. And the objects that float preserved in those little flasks are some of the popular ditties with which Loeffler is so fond of incrustating his work. Once they were "à La Villette," and the Malagueña, and the eighteenth-century marching song of the Lorraine soldiery, and flourished under the windy heaven. But when Loeffler transplanted them respectively into "La Villanelle du Diable," into the "'Cello Rhapsody," and into the "Music for Four Stringed Instruments," they underwent the fate that befalls everything subjected to his exquisite and sterilizing touch.

One comes to the conclusion that perhaps the most significant and symbolic thing in the career of Charles Martin Loeffler is his place of residence. For this Alsatian, French in culture, temperamentally related to the *décadents*, writing music at first resembling that of Fauré and the Wagnerizing Frenchmen, later that of Dukas, and last that of d'Indy and Magnard, has lived the greater portion of his life in no other city than Boston. Coming originally to America for the purpose of playing first violin in the Boston Symphony Orchestra, he has found the atmosphere of the New England capital so pleasant that he has remained there practically ever since. He whom one might suppose almost native to the Paris of Debussy and Magnard and Ravel, of Verlaine and Gustave Kahn and Huysmans, has found comfortable an environment essentially tight and illiberal, a society that masks philistinism with toryism, and manages to drive its radical and vital and artistic youth, in increasing numbers every year, to other places in search of air. And his own career, on the spiritual plane, seems just such an exchange, the preference of a shadowy and frigid place to a blazing and quivering one, the exchange of the eternal Paris for the eternal Boston. His music seems the result of just such a banishment. His art is indeed, in the last analysis, a flight from the group of his kinsmen into, if not exactly the circle, at least the dangerous vicinity of those amiable gentlemen, the Chadwicks and the Converses and all the other highly respectable and sterile "American Composers."

SAKÉ AND SONG

BY SYDNEY GREENBIE

THE Japanese have always been great epicureans, but never was jollity so rife as when, after the coming of the war, merchants jumped like pawns into positions of commercial power and prominence. And from the national game was borrowed a word with which to christen these parvenus, a word by which they are now known round the world—*narikin*. The lavish entertainments these *narikin* permitted themselves, became the talk of Japan. The freedom with which they displayed their wealth and the generally boisterous nature of the Japanese at play, are open to any who cares to look on.

The house I lived in stood up against a hill overlooking the whole of the city of Kobe. Immediately beneath it was the finest and most expensive tea-house, or restaurant, in the city, and it was frequented by officials of the highest rank and the rich in general. It was there for me to watch day and night, and I made use of my position. There below were the long, wooden strips of grating across the length of the room. During summer the paper doors were removed. Every afternoon at about four, I could see the waitresses, stripped to the waist, sitting before their little mirrors, making their toilet for the evening.

From my balcony, late one afternoon, I looked down upon the street. From out of the Tokiwa tea-house came two geisha, gorgeously dressed in their tremendous, richly colored silk *obi* (girdles) round their fantastically embroidered kimonos—two tiny mites absolutely smothered in finery. "They are being introduced to tea-house managers," the boy in the house informed me. "And the two men walking behind them are their new masters."

Then came the usual arrivals of geisha in rickshaws,—attired in red and gold. The gentlemen *narikin* came next, and the quiet waitresses began to slip about over the mats in their incessant round of duties. Gradually, as the *saké* began to take effect, the sounds would grow more and more audible, all would burst into song accom-

panied by clapping of hands; or games between the men and the geisha would produce riotous outbursts of laughter—shrieks of laughter. Games only children would play in the West are here enjoyed by the grey-haired. Men half drunk pursuing girls who are not afraid of being caught but are paid for pretending to resist; or some special geisha, fan in hand, kicking her trailing robes about in what is thought to be a dance: studied, exact, monotonous; thus the evening wears on till midnight. The war having produced an abundance of wealth, merry-making became even more riotous than the Japanese themselves could stand, and the police ordered that tea-houses be closed at twelve. Then for an hour more would continue the calling for rickshaws. A serving maiden would clatter down the street toward our house where was the bend in the road, and from there would call out: "Danna San. Danna San. Icho." Or *Nicho* or *Sancho* as the case might be. She was calling: "Honorable Mr. Rickshaw-man. One round." Or two or three. That is, a guest wanted one or two or three rickshaws. And then her little clogs clattered back again. Sometimes a man would call, and his bellow wakened the neighborhood. And from the distant rickshaw shed a voice would answer, sleepily: "Hai," and some soft, rubber-soled feet would patter up the slight grade. There were farewells, and the night would go to sleep again.

The half-dozen little waitresses, having passed in and out amongst them serving food and saké for hours on end, must be wet with perspiration. Yet they still have their own beds to spread. To me, above, they seem to move noiselessly. Hardly caged animals; yet, not unlike them. For an hour more they go backward and forward, apparently accomplishing nothing, even as before they seemed endlessly doing nothing. They loll about on the mats with quite becoming ease and grace. A long strip commences to unwind endlessly. It is the obi being put aside for the night—not so gorgeous as that the geisha wear, but just as long and as conventional. A match strikes and the quick puff of smoke from the tiny pipe—and the pinch of tobacco is exhausted. Another is pressed into the little bowl of the pipe, another and another. Again endless movement with nothing done. What long hours wasted against the need of sleep, it seems. But even in such slight tasks life finds satisfaction. The day is long, they seem to say: how shall I pass it through, how fill the time of living? To-morrow? Oh, plenty of

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time for sleep. It will be short and duties come aplenty. They appear and disappear, nothing immodest in their movements. And then each creeps between the heavy *futon* (quilts), rests her head upon the wooden pillow, and the last one draws the paper sliding window across, leaving nothing but shadows for me to look upon.

Long after the noise of the tea-house had subsided, I would stand and gaze out across Kobe, beyond the veil of simple tasks concealed, over a deep blue gulch to where glittered innumerable lights, to where the sound of the pneumatic hammers thundered away at the steel hull of the super-dreadnought—the *Ise*—which was then being built at the shipyards. And I would wonder what it was being made to protect. This? This laughter and hilarity of *narikin* who spend their profits at these tea-houses? And I looked further out over Japan and saw fifty millions working, or rather trying to do what specialization and organization have done elsewhere—doing it in the same slipshod, crude, old-fashioned ways as it was being done in this very household into which chance had brought me.

But what is it that induces so much noise and laughter? What can the grown-up Japanese see in these tiny mites or even their more grown-up sisters, to lavish so much wealth and dignity upon them? To a sober Western observer it seems the height of absurdity, and in one way is a splendid commentary on Japanese character.

True, there were more dignified performances, as when the Minister of Communications came to stay there. An elaborate dinner was given, and the most attractive geisha obtainable were ordered. As I looked through the thin gauze curtains which hung across the inner open door-way, it seemed like some fairy setting. A row of men had squatted upon the mats, eating a meal endlessly various. There seemed end neither to dishes nor appetite. The saké flowed freely. Then the geisha commenced to dance, and a more gorgeous spectacle could not be found anywhere. The minister himself, though preserving the utmost dignity, was not too disdainful of the grosser enjoyments. Applause was profuse. But the guests disbanded somewhat earlier than usual—at eleven o'clock.

It is customary to observe all sorts of events, business or otherwise, personal or national, with similar feasting, and frequently foreigners are invited. Especially was this so during the war, and when the armistice and peace were celebrated. Then *narikin* gave dinners which vied in elaborateness with those of the West.

But the majority of evenings are spent in riotous carousing in which Bacchus proves himself no antiquarian.

However much all other forms of Japanese social life may be closed to him, no foreigner is ever a total outsider to these affairs. He is bound, sooner or later, to become friendly with some Japanese, and few Japanese have any conception of entertainment other than with geisha. And I was no exception. I had gone to Osaka one day, and there, at a commercial exhibition, met a gentleman who proved to be my preceptor in the amenities of geishadom. My friend—for so I may now call him—was a sober little gentleman devoted to his unusually charming young wife. "You wait for me half an hour and I be free to go with you show you Osaka. I will introduce you to my best of friend. You American, I know. I lived in America ten years. My wife was born in America. You wait half an hour." I promised. And that was my beginning.

In a sense the Japanese are the most sociable people in the world, and I found myself taken in by strangers everywhere, in just such a free and easy manner. Yet with the men at the boarding-house I found it almost impossible to become intimate. While home we were very friendly, but they never asked me to join them in any adventure. Girl friends are things practically unknown to them. Except geisha, whom, other than his sisters, is a man to know? During my stay there, my neighbor once brought up two girls on a visit: one was Eurasian, the other pure native. The absence of real privacy in Japanese houses minimizes any suspicion which might attach itself to such a visit. I was introduced to them. I tried to be sociable, especially as they both spoke English fluently, but my efforts failed.

Come to the home of the Westerner and his wife will entertain you. The Japanese girl doesn't get any such training and never knows what it is to be sociable with men. Therefore the Japanese cannot understand our courtesies and attention to young women. Naturally, they put upon it the wrong interpretation.

Among the young men living at the house, the subject of women seldom came up for discussion. From all appearances, they might all have been celibate priests. One day, however, we were watching the girls in the tea-houses across the way, and I led them on to talk about morality in Japan.

"Do young men ever have girl friends?" I asked him.

"Oh, yes," he answered. "They are beginning to, more and more."

"Well," I ventured, "do they ever bring girls up to their rooms, at their boarding houses?"

"No, they don't. It wouldn't be allowed," he assured me.

The general tone of conversation with these young men was always restrained and decent. They spoke with a gentility which is the way of the thoughtful and educated young Japanese. Notwithstanding that drinking is nowhere taboo, neither of these two, on my floor, drank. They were not Christian, and even for Buddhism they had little regard, as is the case with most educated Japanese. Still, they intimated that they did not look with favor upon licentiousness, and were chauvinistically ashamed of their restricted districts—the cages.

"Foreigners," said one of them, in answer to my question, "are perhaps on the average more moral than Japanese; but in principle our ways are just as good as yours. Foreigners, however, seem to us too proud." It was curious, for to my way of thinking, he had completely reversed it. To me foreigners are by no means more moral. Some are too proud, but it is a different pride from that of the Japanese. They (the foreigners) are more used to being proud, but the Japanese stamps and swaggers because he does not know how to be proud with dignity. He simulates or emulates too much the old time samurai officiousness.

I found it impossible to be pals with Japanese. Either the man is a narikin in the making and takes it upon himself to entertain you on behalf of his country, never letting you pay; or else he is poor and unashamed of his poverty, and always lets you pay. And in both cases it is pride. Yet, he is overawed by any foreigner, and when he is poor, he makes no pretensions.

One day my friend, Mr. Suzuki, brought his "best of friend" Hayashi, a Hyogo exporter, with him to my place. We looked across, as one could not help doing, to the Tokiwa. We chatted about it. "Have you ever been there?" he asked. I confessed. "Well, I will take you." And he was as good as his word. The entrance down below was as attractive in its simplicity as a mere entrance could be. The waitresses knelt upon the mats at the door to receive their guests. The smooth, unpainted woodwork, the expensive screens, the spacious rooms—one felt he had come into a great temple turned pagan. Half a dozen geisha had been ordered, and

we were assigned to an open room on an extension, with an unobstructed view of Kobe from every angle. It was merely a corner of the great big, open garden, as it were.

The girls showed they were being taxed unduly, having to entertain a foreigner. I could not speak to them very well, and put myself in the hands of my friend. Being new to these intimacies, I requested that the girls dance for me, as otherwise I should have been on the outside of the jollity—none of the witticisms which provoked so much laughter being interpreted to me. I thought perhaps my friend regarded them as too vulgar for the ears of a foreigner.

The geisha is not an over-attractive personality. Her grace is too cramped, too limited. Her movements while dancing are extremely proper, according to code, and seldom, if ever, rise to any terpsichorean liveliness as we know it. She turns about on the balls of her feet, kicking the trailing gowns outward, not immodestly, and manipulates a fan in definitely prescribed ways. The fan is the essence of the art, next to which in importance is the movement of the hands. Otherwise, neither the music nor the dance quickened my artistic sense to a thrill.

They taught me a song. The melody was simple and so monotonous that it almost wearied me. But the words, when interpreted to me, made me understand—and then I sang with them, and loved Japan in that song.

Literally it is this:

"Iso de meisho wa Oharai Sama To
By a famous beach, O Hara San
Matsu ga miyamasu honobonoto
Pine tree sees faintly
Matsu ga miyamasu iso iso honobonoto
Pine tree sees blithesome faintly."

They seemed to be drunk with the very repetition of the song. To me it was but a translation, and I could see the picture it presented. But they sang it over and over again, taught it to me with a patience which is either childish or sublime, that is, either without understanding or with a sense of the oneness of the universe, almost as though it were a prayer. They repeated it over and over again, and it was the only song sung that evening with any interest. It seemed

to be part of them and to emanate as the perfume from the rose, as color from a sunset.

We were absorbed in this song. The girl who took it upon herself to instruct me was most vivacious and attractive. I almost forgot my surroundings, and paid no attention to those coming or going. Suddenly, into the monotony of the dancing and the singing came a little girl. She was just fourteen. Her silks and embroideries were fabulous, and the artificially white skin was solid and fresh. She was a tiny thing, and should be forgiven if the gorgeous raiment made her think of herself and feel happy. She came in with the usual bow, sat down quietly, but the gaze of everyone of us was instantly upon her, and the faces of the other geisha showed both satisfaction and envy. The little thing felt happy, and yet dared not find expression for that happiness; so that every little while a smile would turn on her lips and contract or be suppressed. She was happy, but still it must have hurt her not to be happy girlishly.

Six months or more later, I met her at another geisha party. She did not recognize me, but finally recalled the evening. But what a change! She was already the favorite of a foreigner, with all the tricks and self-conscious indifference of her profession.

One evening Mr. Suzuki and I decided to go to see more of geisha life. I could see that his wife did not approve of it, but he was master and no argument was necessary. The geisha takes the place of the club and no woman will dare deny that to her husband. The geisha is not his companion—she is merely a specialist in the entertainment of men. The wife entertains him at home, the geisha, abroad, and if he wants a concubine or two, there is no law prohibiting it. The present Emperor, himself the son by a side wife, the lady Yanagiwara, is the first to have adopted monogamy, but his father had five wives.

We moved along our way through the vast crowd which had swarmed the streets on its way to a temple, and took to a back street or roadway along the bank of the Minatogawa. There were neither lights nor pavements, and the dust raised by the scraping of the *geta* (clogs) was distressing. The dark, starlit night did not minister to Japanese atmosphere; only the strangeness was real.

We dropped down among the shacks, the dirty ratty places, wandered through narrow alleys amidst squalor and poverty. Not our

kind of poverty, though—not so degraded, but more primitive. In Japan poverty does not arouse so much sympathy because it is not so definitely below the general condition. It is so common that one takes no more notice of it than of a poor horse.

Further on we were in alleys lined with cleaner, better, and more luxurious houses. This is where the geisha live. They have no homes, for a Japanese could not be gay in the presence of his parents or the parents of a geisha. The parents being older, he would have to sit still and be sober. Consequently, the geisha have their own quarters. The proprietors of these houses are all "respectable." They look after the girls with law-abiding interest.

When we found the appointed place, we entered. The clean, somewhat charming old woman brought out sheets of paper on which the names of at least eight hundred girls were printed. When a girl is hired, a hole is punched with a toothpick over her name; when she returns, a hole is punched beneath it. The girls are ordered from a central office—where a strict register is kept of their movements. To wander over to one of these offices, reminds one of a miniature stock-exchange. The atmosphere of intense activity, of the passing of great possessions from one to another, makes of it the most lively place in the quarters.

When the girls my friend favored arrived, we were well into the feast. The normal length of a Japanese meal is about three and a half hours. I sat with my friends watching the meat and the greens sizzling on the brazier, eating little pieces at set intervals. It was tantalizing. I could have devoured the whole of it post-haste, but had to wait each time for someone to take a chopstickful first. It was a delicious torture, for each mouthful was worth the waiting for. *Sukiyaki*, it is called, which means "enjoyable fry."

Six geisha came in and sat. Two of them talked, and my stammering Japanese formed part, if not all, of the amusement; but there was no dancing, playing, or singing. What they were being paid for under these circumstances I could not tell. It only indicated the real evil of the geisha habit. They were neither friends nor entertainers, just simply parasites, or, let us give them some place in life, wall flowers.

My friend asked what I thought of their looks; I indicated which I considered the prettiest. No, that was not *his* choice. "The one to my right," he said, "forty-five per cent.; the next, thirty-five per

cent.; then fifty-five per cent. (the one I had indicated), and lastly, seventy-five per cent." That is the quaint way they have of passing judgement on women. Later on, another girl came in. Indeed, she was the best, and we assessed her at eighty per cent. She was not a beauty, being a little too stout, but she had charm and character and "go." She did everything, some things a little vulgarly, some charmingly, and some revealing training and education. She was the favorite. She liked foreigners, knew a few words of English, and kept the lot of us in a merry mood. What the main topic of conversation was, however, I never knew. Japanese are most exasperating in this, for they will carry on miles of conversation even about yourself, without as much as attempting to bring you into the affair. You simply have to extract an interpretation, so shy and evasive are they.

Thus another four hours of life passed on. It was not a bore, yet certainly not interesting. It cost us ten yen, five dollars, each, dozens of bottles of aerated water and beer, food and fruit, jokes and laughter. One girl played the violin—an altogether new thing to them—but one other did not so much as make a remark all evening. Yet this is what is in so great demand in Japan, so much so that one must employ these girls days ahead of time if one has any choice at all. And thus is man's sanity secured.

I had expressed an interest in the historical phase of this life and reminded my friend that he could show me what life in old Japan had been like in a vivid way. So a few weeks later he called upon me again and asked if I would come out with him for the evening. This time it was distant from the usual geisha quarters, off from the old road which before the coming of the foreigners had been the main street of Hyogo—Kobe's parent city. Even after the coming of the white man, this road had played its dramatic part, for, to avoid passing the hated foreign settlement, the samurai and daimyo had taken to traveling to Kyoto by turning northward and cutting through the hills over what is now known as Arima-michi (Arima Highway). To this hidden inn along Arima-michi we went that evening.

Besides dancing and singing and now more friendly intimacy, the proprietor brought her store of ancient possessions which she keeps for just such occasions. Japanese who wish to play samurai, or ancient noblemen, can here satisfy their desires. We regaled ourselves in these old-time costumes and acted scenes and samurai practices so

romantic to them. Thus, for a few moments, I was a Chinese patriarch, and then a powerful shogun in glittering gown with a tiny wife to follow me and obey. Every one paid me the respect due a superior. My friend was a valiant samurai dressed in weighty armour. He depicted a departure for war, the scene between himself and his sweetheart, their marriage, and the sad moments of parting. They acted as though born to it; not, however, without a conscious show of ridicule.

Saké began to flow and all became cheerful. Even the old woman, the proprietor's wife, imbibed freely at her guests' expense. She was soon quite gay and avowed most emphatically that she loved me. Her old husband finally came in and good-naturedly picked her up and carried her out of the room. His kindness completely whitewashed her helpless coarseness.

The eighty per cent. geisha of the previous party was present. Her name—that is, her geisha name—was Tamosabura. She was dark-complexioned and left herself so, for she did not paint. Tamosabura was twenty-five, and admitted it. She was the most intelligent and had the finest character, but hid it. And when I was just about to forget that she was a geisha, she would make some suggestive remark which made me wish men did not have to be made "happy" and girls subjected to a training in subtleties to achieve it for them.

She affected a great liking for me, but I am sure she didn't even dislike me—a red devil of a foreigner. She pretended to be happy, but she was not sad. She was slightly curious about me, yet mocked me. I struggled with Japanese to learn a language, the value of the usage of which was a vague possibility to me wrapped in a mantle of promise. She learned a few English words and showed her contempt for the language by using them to amuse the illiterate and the simple-minded.

She rose to go. It was half past ten but she said she had to keep another engagement. To put away her *samisen* (the Japanese guitar which has no music in it) the others came to her assistance. My attention was called to this. It was a show of courtesy to which she, as a superior, was entitled. And with more sweep and motion than is common with most Japanese women, she slipped out of the door.

Things fell flat after that, though we did not leave till one in the

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morning. There was then neither tram nor rickshaw. The concern for my safety all of them manifested was indeed remarkable. One woman went ahead and presently returned with a *kuruma*. With a *kurumaysan* they would trust me to arrive unharmed. My way lay through one of the outer regions of the city. The girls were most considerate and kindly, a loveliness in feminine character which always wins Western men's sympathies.

Through the narrow little by-ways of Hyogo my sturdy rickshaw man bore me. There was so much blackness round about that this trustworthy coolie shone with human radiance. Alone, it might not have been altogether well for me to wander away out here. With him, panting and shifting the place of the shafts, I rode with delight and composure. The electric lights at every gate seemed sleepy within their nooks and corners.

I had time and ease in which to reflect on the night and its experiences. One certainly grows to love these people with a melancholy love. They are not ugly, I thought, but certainly not beautiful; they are not sad, but certainly not happy; they are not prim, but certainly not free; they are not refined, but certainly not vulgar. What are they, then? They are geisha, the product of a feudalism in which a man might do anything he pleased, aside from real thinking. They are a specialized institution. Though the geisha may easily be a libertine in her profession, still I have yet to see her nightly employer take any public liberties with her, as is done with a Western prostitute. Hired for the occasion, to satisfy the pleasure-seeking, she still maintains her dignity. Whatever her morals, in appearance she is the most circumspect individual in the world. It is to the credit of Japanese un-morality that, using their women, they do not torture them as does the West.

Japanese have no women friends, only wives, servants and geisha, alias prostitutes. Whereas we would not think of going out for an evening's pleasure without our girl friends, in Japan the presence of women must be paid for, though they do nothing at all to earn their fees. And back home, my friend's little wife and servant were sitting up for him, for she told me that on all occasions she remains up till he comes, and would not sleep through the night should he remain away.

One rapidly tires of the geisha and their accomplishments, but the resident in Japan soon learns to endure with un-patient resignation

these Oriental amenities. For it is indeed a matter of looking for a square egg if one tries to find a place without them. Even should one keep entirely away from their quarters and the tea-houses, the nights are so full with their shouting and playing that willy-nilly one has them with him. And when the summer comes, or during plum-blossom or cherry-blossom viewing, the tumult drifts into the public parks—and then one must indeed say farewell to peace.

It was while trying to avoid one such place that a friend of mine and I turned down the street towards the slums and the factories, instead of taking to the upper paths along the hill. The houses were monotonously regular, dirty and poor, their only virtue being that they were low and permitted an almost unobstructed view of the hills above. Occasionally the landscape opened, disclosing a glimpse of the sea like the carelessly closed kimono which often affords a peep at the Japanese woman's breasts.

When we reached the foot of the hills, we turned to the left, because the way to the right was so prohibitive. The factories, with their green and brown gaseous smoke, were too much for us. We had not gone very far when we came upon some buildings which puzzled us. They looked like barracks or prisons, yet we knew they could be neither. The window openings were about two feet square, closed with thin strips pasted over with paper. We were discoursing somewhat generally upon the materialism of modern Japan when a voice, coarse yet sweet, rang out from the nearest aperture. It made us stop and look each other in the face. Something drew us close to each other, as though the whole of that which is loveliest in all Japan had enveloped us. It was immediately followed by a chorus of voices unutterably sweet and wholesome. Our curiosity became aroused. The lure was so great that we decided to find out what these singers were doing.

Entering by way of an open gate in the high board fence, we came into a yard of picturesque simplicity. In the corner was a deep well over which stood the old fashioned well-sweep, for all the world just as it must have stood in the days of the patriarchs. Upon a ledge stood a Japanese, bringing the water up as rapidly as possible and pouring it into the buckets of another. That other, when his two pails were full, shouldered them on his yoke and with a jerky, swinging gait passed on into the darkened building beyond. The life was so primitive, the atmosphere so sober, we felt we had sud-

denly slipped out of the modern rush of new Japan into something we shall probably find at the other end of time when man arrives. Tremendous tubs, eight feet in diameter, lay about the yards, wheel after wheel of them. Omar's request that we turn down "an empty glass" was here but half complied with: these were empty, but on their sides, waiting to be turned up again. One man picked up a single bucket of water and strolled across the scene as it is said men did in Rachel's days. And the bamboo pole see-sawed its way between heaven and the dark depths of the well, awaking visions of Eastern life now hardly Oriental.

From this outer yard the doors stood wide into the dungeon-like saké cellars; we were in a saké-brewing establishment. Here the tremendous tubs stood upright, six and seven feet high. The sweet-scented saké bubbled with ferment, and in and about the tubs moved the men, overgrown dwarfs of a raised underworld.

It seemed for a moment that our coming had broken the charm, and they would not sing again. For the first time necessity seemed to me a spiritual parent instead of an earthly one. They had to stir their tubs, and habit was too closely allied to birth and seclusion to be interrupted long by a mere visitation of strange foreigners. Slowly they reverted to song and labours. As they stood on the rims of the monstrous tubs, their staffs sunk into the thick, white foaming rice brew, they seemed living monuments of contentment stirring the cups of forgetfulness for the world.

Then one led off, and his voice rang out clear in that darkened vault—clear as the thin rays of light which entered through the cracks in the paper windows. The other three men took up the strains, and then they followed each other in perfect rhythm to which they kept time by beating with their staff-mixers on the bottoms. The hands holding the staff shot out full length and came down on the bottom with a gentle thud, were drawn in and raised again,—one after the other, not a fraction of a second out of time. The song needed no words of explanation. The paper apertures threw little light on any details. Songs without words, and atmosphere without trifles—and for a moment, a world without progress. Simple folk whose hearts are free from affectation can make their untrained voices the envy of great singers, and their wooden tools the peer of instruments. It was as though all that is lovely in human aspiration were being held firm to reality by the thud of a staff.

Relief from progress and striving is a thrilling intoxicant; whether one chooses whiskey or mere illusion, the result is the same. Whenever I think back to my days in Japan I always feel a contrast between the vulgarities of the saké-drinking, idle Japanese, and the loveliness of these happy toilers there in the dark vaults of Nada.

INFERENTIAL

BY EDWIN ARLINGTON ROBINSON

Although I saw before me there the face
Of one whom I had honored among men
The least, and on regarding him again
Would not have had him in another place,
He fitted with an unfamiliar grace
The coffin where I could not see him then
As I had seen him and appraised him when
I deemed him unessential to the race.

For there was more of him than what I saw.
And there was on me more than 'the old awe
That is the common genius of the dead.
I might as well have heard him: "Never mind;
If some of us were not so far behind,
The rest of us were not so far ahead."

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A TRAGIC END

BY GILBERT CANNAN

I

THE end was tragic because nothing happened or ever could happen. Once again life had moved too fast for Digby Tisand, who was one of those people whom everybody likes because they expect nothing and get what they expect. He was in nobody's way except his own, but fortunately he was on good terms with himself and had inherited a comfortable income. He could do what he liked but he very rarely liked anything enough to wish to do it. Yet he was affectionate, though when the affection of others came his way it hurt him because he knew he did not deserve it. He suffered from an incurable modesty.

He was a Barrister: that is, he had chambers in the Temple into which he could take refuge when the idea of entering his club became insupportable, but nobody ever briefed him except his own family, because he was incapable of speaking with authority and was always convinced by his opponent's argument. It has to be added that he was capable of the most passionate admiration but could never express it, because it seemed to him to be an intrusion upon the object of it.

Pleasant to look upon, he was good at games and in spite of his French name was almost overwhelmingly English. He had many acquaintances but no friends; and he lived in a tiny box of a flat in Westminster, because that was the place to which he had drifted when he came to London, for no particular reason except that his "set" at Oxford had all gone to London. They had succeeded, married, become important; but he remained unimportant and thereby enjoyed a certain distinction. There were times, however, when he longed for some woman to take him seriously, but that never happened and by the time he was thirty he had put that hope from him, and found consolation in adoring the heroines in books. Occasionally he met women who were like those heroines, but they were nearly always married or engaged or terrifyingly intelligent, and

anyhow, in their presence, Digby could not utter a sound. In fact, their and life's refusal to take any notice of him had become a joke to which he attached all that he was capable of in the way of religious worship. When people discussed him, which was seldom, they said that he had a sense of humour.

He had a little brown moustache and absurd steady brown eyes, and he was always good-natured, never speaking unkindly of anyone and not knowing enough of what was going on about him to carry tales or gossip. It was positively indecent how people flirted in his presence. He saw nothing, because everything was too quick for him.

No woman ever decided that he ought to be married until Stella met him, and Stella made up her mind at once. She was young enough to find everybody as charming as herself, and she found Digby perfectly delightful. She saw at once that he suffered from an excessive slowness and keyed herself down to him, took the most touching pains to reveal to him what was going on in the life about them, and interpreted for him the people in the house where they were staying by means of her brilliant gift of caricature. When their characters were distorted and blown out to grotesque proportions, he could see them and laughed till he cried at Stella's sallies. In return, for the benefit of the house-party, she dressed him up and turned him into a caricature of himself at which *they* laughed until *they* cried and said that dear Mr. Tissand had *such* a sense of humour.

Stella was like a dancing sprite of mischief. She was eighteen, very young at that, most slender, most graceful, pale, and full of a childish dignity, and to Digby, dressed up as he was one night in woman's clothes, there came a moment of revelation. She was the first human being he had ever seen. He smiled all over from top to toe and she seemed to him a better joke even than himself and all the worship that for years had been centred upon the joke of himself went out to her. From that moment on he knew nothing at all except that there was a moon and some pine trees and Stella in blue and himself babbling of love and beauty and Stella's lips, and her hands were in his and he was kissing them and somehow she seemed immensely large and her face was very remote, very lovely, with her head thrown back and a puzzled expression of pain in her eyes. She said nothing and he went on kissing her hands, long-fingered and

lovely, because he did not know what to do next. His brain throbbed as he laboured to find what to say or do and at last, with an astounding emphasis, he said:

"The next thing is to get married."

"O! I couldn't," said Stella quietly.

"By God, you shall!" replied Digby with a violence that almost laid him flat, because he had never had a will before and he felt uncomfortably and unaccountably that this will was not his own.

She broke into a peal of happy laughter and Digby said:

"Of course you will."

"Of course I will," she said, tucking her hand into his arm.

He trembled and whispered to himself:

"This is happiness. I am happy."

He wanted terribly to say it out loud but he knew that although Stella was only a child she knew far more about it than he did. It was quite extraordinary how, when she had stood with her head thrown back, there was in her eyes an expression of having gained something which she had almost lost.

After his startling revelation of will Digby was perfectly helpless. The vision of Stella that he had had was completely gone, and he began to see her as a heroine. That was disconcerting because he could not see himself as a hero, and he stood foolishly fumbling with finger and thumb at his moustache.

"O! you darling! darling little man!" cried Stella, flinging her arms round him suddenly. "You are mine, mine, mine."

Digby melted into a delicious sense of being a darling, but through it there came stabbing the knowledge that the charm he had for her was her own, and that it had all happened because she was so very young, and so vital, and so unaware of what she was: a lovely thing, no longer child and not yet woman. He mumbled:

"I don't think we quite know—"

But she pressed her hand over his lips and would not let him speak, and tears trickled down his cheek and he knew that he was not a man or anything like one: just a joke, just an oddity. So he broke into blubbering:

"I adore you. I adore you."

Stella hugged him for that, took him firmly by the hand and led him back to the house.

II

All night long he lay sweating with horror at what he had done. The idea that he had taken a positive step was a terror to him, but directly he thought of Stella he was helpless. Her charm oozed over him, made him glow, stiffen into an unwonted and intoxicating virility which collapsed at the most inconvenient moments, just, for instance, when he saw himself as heroic, making a career for himself for *her* sake, or writing that comic book he had often thought of to make her laugh. Not a wink of sleep did he get all night, and he thought, as the greyest of grey dawns came slinking up the sky:

"This is going to be horrible, horrible."

He felt that he had not a friend in the world. Not the slightest desire did he have to get up and face a new day. Once he was with Stella he knew that he would be safe. She was so strong, so vividly alive, so quick, but he would have to see her at breakfast with other people and after breakfast, some time or other, he would have to tell them. And then of course Stella had a father and mother: and brothers no doubt, brilliant fellows, who did things and understood everything that was going on around them: sisters possibly, like Stella but different, with cleverness instead of knowledge. Astounding how easy it was to construct a whole family out of Stella.

At last, gloomily staring out of the window, Digby reached the conclusion:

"I wish I wasn't such a damn fool."

That was the best he could do in the circumstances, and it was enough to get him out of bed and downstairs without further tremor.

Stella had been up for hours. She was waiting for him downstairs with a basket of mushrooms.

"You like them, don't you?" she said. "I'm not going to let anybody else eat them."

Her charm this morning was cool and dewy and less than ever could Digby resist it.

"I didn't expect," he said, "I didn't expect you to begin at once to think of feeding me."

"That is the very first thing I thought of when I woke up," she re-

plied. "Do let us always live in the country. You look so nice in flannels."

"Anywhere you like," said Digby, "only we ought always to live in the summer, because you—well—you know—you look—" He became inarticulate with love of her.

At breakfast there was no need to explain. Everybody was delighted. Digby was "such a dear" and the general feeling was that Stella was safer married, and there was not the slightest tinge of jealousy to mar the general happiness, because the idea of marrying Digby had never before crossed any female mind. High spirits prevailed, and Digby found, as other men have found, that once the idea of his marriage was accepted he had very little to do with it. He liked that because he was used to living automatically, but he resented Stella's being taken away from him and transformed out of being Stella into a bride. She escaped every now and then but never for very long. It seemed that the whole wisdom of her sex had to be imparted to her. Digby found that life was moving faster than ever before and gave it up as hopeless. Only with and through Stella could he cope with it.

She was the first to leave the party, and after she had gone he found that he could not endure either the place or the people. This was strange, because he had never before disliked anything or anyone. So he escaped and found even his adored London, London of the Temple and the Club and Piccadilly shining like a river on a wet night, even that home of homes, dull, but acutely, torturingly dull, and his only occupation in it was and could be to tell his friends that he was going to be married to Stella. That he loathed doing, because it made him realize for the first time in his life that no one had ever taken him seriously. And, without Stella, they would not do so now.

He was just getting into his tail-coat when he remembered Mrs. Marwood. He sat down heavily and pulled at his collar.

Mrs. Marwood was a lady some years his senior on whom he had been in the habit of calling every Sunday since he was eighteen, and every Sunday he had aired his opinions in her drawing-room, an apartment sacred to that rite. In no other place was Digby aware that he had an opinion, but Mrs. Marwood had created the habit in him and because his experience with her was unique he had liked her. Occasionally he took her to the theatre or to concerts, but he knew

nothing about her except that she was beautiful and dined with eminent persons and entertained distinguished foreigners when they came to London. Perhaps, at bottom, that was why Digby liked her flat, because what pleased him most in London was the number of people who were doing terribly important things the necessity for which he could never understand. For over twelve years he had been going to her house, but the things that went on there were no more intelligible to him than they had been in the beginning, and Mrs. Marwood remained an admirable mystery.

And now suddenly she had become a menace, the nature of which Digby could not fathom. Dressed for calling, he called on her—patent-leather boots, chamois gloves, yellow cane, silk hat. He stared distastefully at the door of her flat and when it was opened handed in his card and bolted breathlessly, saying to himself:

"I will write."

He found it difficult to write, but at last squeezed out of himself a bare statement that he was going to be married, though the words he used did not in the least describe the process through which he was passing. They had seemed well enough with his friends and relations, but with Mrs. Marwood they were inadequate; but when he looked back on it he found that he had always felt that life itself was just a little inadequate for the lady, whose tragedy it was that, in her own eyes, she had been born twenty years before her time. Digby had admired her for being tragic, and when he was very young he used to sit for hours while she talked about it, and told him the things that great men had said about her: "A woman in stone watching Time go by." That was one of the phrases, but the best were in French, a language which Digby did not understand.

All these things trickled through his brain as he wrote, and filled him with an increasing distaste and uneasiness. Even writing long silly letters to Stella did not relieve him, because the more he wrote the more incredible seemed the thing that had happened to him.

At last the day came when, armed with his solicitor's statement of his unimpeachable financial condition, he was to visit Stella's parents. He was received at the door of the modern Jacobean suburban country house by Stella with her arm round Mrs. Marwood's waist. Stella beamed, Mrs. Marwood beamed. Digby reeled.

"I am so delighted," said Mrs. Marwood. "I have known Stella since she was a baby."

That was a shock too. Digby had never thought of Stella as a baby. She was a thing that shone in beauty under pine-trees and the moon.

He bowed but could find nothing to say. The situation was overwhelmingly unexpected, and he had never been in a situation before. That indeed had been the cardinal fact of his existence until Stella came to displace it. "I'm—I'm glad," he muttered, "very glad."

Mrs. Marwood tactfully left the young people.

"I think she's wonderful," said Stella enthusiastically. "And she speaks so warmly about you. Her knowing you has made all the difference in the world. Dad thought you were just an ordinary house-party young man."

Those words rang dismally in Digby's heart. He knew that they described him exactly, and he stood stupidly wondering if situations always forced out the truth and if that was why people avoided them.

"You don't look pleased," said Stella.

"O! yes. I'm pleased. Only I didn't expect—"

"What?"

"Mrs. Marwood."

III

How he got married Digby never knew. He had painful flashes and glimmerings through the whirl of women and clothes and house-agents' catalogues which a wedding seemed to entail. It was all very painful and humiliating and whenever a decision had to be made it was referred to Mrs. Marwood, until at last by familiarity it began to be forced upon Digby's sluggish memory that there was nothing new in all this and that Mrs. Marwood had interfered in his existence before, had indeed always done so ever since he had known her, though he could not exactly say how: a subtle process that had been spread out over so many years that he had no more suspected it than he had the connection between his income and what the newspapers called social injustice. For the first time in his life he was filled with a feeling of active dislike, and as he stood in his flat, pulling his moustache and slowly cogitating this new sensation of his, he was astonished to hear himself say:

"Yes. By Jove. That's it. There are too many women in the world."

As America to Columbus was this discovery to him. He stepped upon the firm but inhospitable land of thought, and was instantly afraid. His brain twinged in protest, but the adventure was begun, and he saw himself in a flash of vision as isolated in the wilderness with Stella and Mrs. Marwood, Stella young and radiant, Mrs. Marwood faded and worn, and it seemed to him that life had stopped still, indeed had always been still and that he had been wrong to think of it as moving too fast for him. He had been right to sit still and everybody else had been wrong to try and overtake life. It never moved. It just took shape and slowly emerged, and the only thing to do was to watch life—just that. How could one do anything else? After all, there was he, there was Stella, and there was Mrs. Marwood, Stella like a wood in primrose-time and Mrs. Marwood like the same wood when the leaves have fallen.

"By Jove," said Digby, gasping with excitement. "By Jove, I'm a philosopher, and . . . damn it all, I'm a . . . I'm a poet."

That exaltation did not last long, and he admitted frankly that he was after all only a man on the point of being married.

Married he was. Stella was a perfectly adorable bride, and she revelled in her honeymoon. Not again was Digby troubled with thought. He smoked, read, talked, boasted, laughed, kissed, wept, and was the normal husband. Stella teased, cajoled, explored his temper, his tastes, his humour, his appetites, and put on womanhood as gracefully as she did her clothes.

When they returned to the world, they had a small house in town, a larger house in the country, a motor car—and Mrs. Marwood, whom, curiously enough, they never discussed, though nothing was done without her being consulted. Digby remembered occasionally that this, in the small matters of every-day existence, had been his habit, but it irritated him to see Stella emulating him. Yet he could say nothing. Stella was happy. That was the chief, the only consideration. Sometimes she lost her temper with him for his reiteration of the question:

"Are you happy?"

Once indeed she lost her temper so violently that when she asked him why he couldn't assume that she was happy he replied with the touching frankness which sometimes overcame him:

"I've nothing else to do."

He was filled with a sense of disaster when Mrs. Marwood offered him a job in a political organisation. He knew perfectly well that Stella had consulted Mrs. Marwood, and though his soul protested against it, he accepted. It meant seeing Mrs. Marwood continually, and he began to understand the meaning of her mysterious activities and the atmosphere of importance with which she was surrounded. He also saw that Mrs. Marwood had been trying to get him to do this very thing for a dozen years. The glow of triumph in the woman forced him to see that and he marvelled at the tenacity of purpose in women. . . .

Stella grew every day more beautiful and more lovable, and Digby felt himself growing every day more commonplace and helpless. Sometimes he was terrified. Here was he living, a solitary male, in a house with five females, his wife, Mrs. Marwood, a cook, and two maids. That was an awful thought to him, and it drove him into a mood of violent hostility which lasted for some weeks and at last produced the thing for which he had been hungering—another situation, even though it might be fatal, as, granted his ill-equipment, it probably would be.

It came one night at dinner. Stella had just told him that she thought she was going to have a baby. He should have been happy but was utterly miserable. He wanted a son and was quite certain the baby would be a girl. Mrs. Marwood dropped in at the last moment. She looked tired and really old, a woman who had lost her capacity for physical sympathy. The government was not doing what she thought it ought to do.

"To hell with the government!" said Digby.

"Digby!" cried Stella.

"To hell with politics!" he continued, and he wanted to send a good many things after them, but once again he began to think. His temper vanished. He was filled with a strange clear ecstasy, and he saw the two women sitting there on either side of him as terrible monsters who hated and loathed each other and were bound together in their hatred and in their common concentration upon himself, both demanding of him something that was not there, that could not be there, something that had existed that night under the moon and the pine-trees, something that was not in him or in any man, something perhaps that only women of all things created can

perceive in life, something that turns the terror of existence into charm. His lips twitched into a ghastly smile, and he was just about to speak his thought when the ecstasy snapped, and he knew that he would never think again.

He laughed a little hysterically, and Stella said:

"Is anything the matter, darling?"

"Oh! no," he replied. "Oh! no. I was just —er—a—" He became apologetic. "A—thinking, what a joke life is."

"I always did say," murmured Mrs. Marwood in her sweet low tone, "I always did say that Digby had a delightful sense of humour."

Digby sank into silence. It was over. Everything was over. Never again for him would there be another situation. Life might be good to Stella: he hoped to God it might be; but life, which had never troubled much about him, had finished with him for ever. Nothing had happened. Nothing ever could happen. He had expected nothing and had got what he expected.

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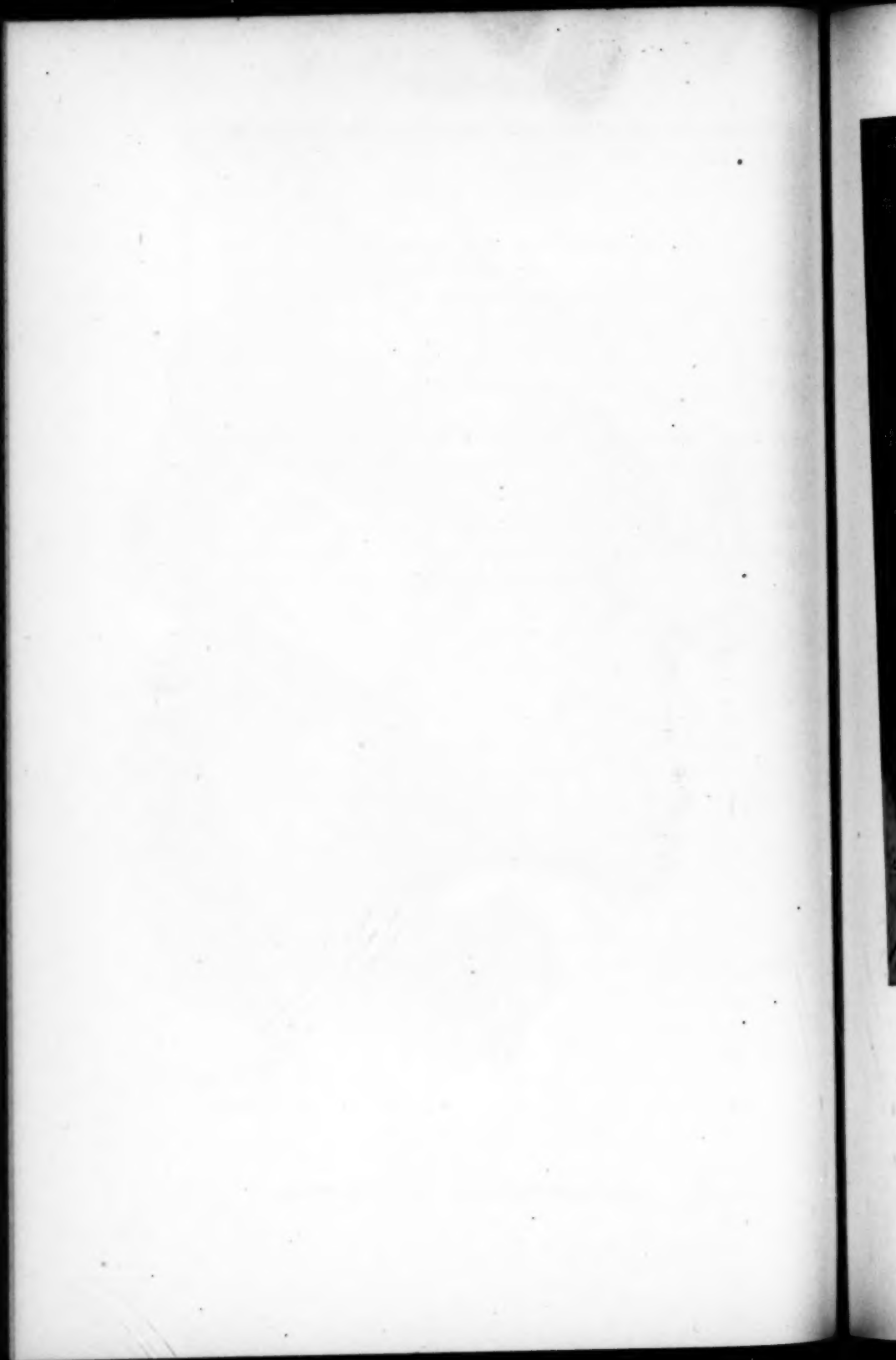
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BOARDMAN ROBINSON. BY IVAN OPPFER





Courtesy of Daniel Gallery

TWO PRISONERS; RUSSIA, 1915 BY BOARDMAN ROBINSON

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THE ART OF THE AMERICAN INDIAN

BY WALTER PACH

FOR the tragedies of the past we are too late—the individual has been lost; the free people with its ancient culture has been destroyed by the brutality and ignorance of the invader; its story goes into history and literature, and at some distant time the tangible relics of its life are collected and ranged on the shelves of a museum. Usually the sole value they have there is to serve as models for the men of a later age, and it is a questionable value, for they will lead astray the many who see only the externals of the old works and ideas—the insight which permits a crossing of the barriers of time and race being reserved for the few who can penetrate to the spirit of an ancient people and thereby strengthen their own.

But there is another value for history and the museum. If we cannot intercede in the tragedies of the past, we can see in them a warning against needless wrong in present times. Such a wrong may occur in America, in the case of the Indians of our Southwest. For most of us the question of the Indian has seemed a thing of the past. He is on his reservations and should be well treated by the Government, all will agree, but few of us know that in certain localities—very considerable ones—his ancient life and culture still exists under the threat of extinction.

Some people will say that the threat comes from circumstance, from evolution. The West is growing up, and even if the Indians keep their land, the ideas of the white man must enter their territory and drive out the old ideas. It is true that the nomadic tribes that peopled the greater part of America can no longer continue in their ancient state. But the question of the Indians of the Southwest is entirely different. Historically they are a sedentary race, like the Mayas and Aztecs of Mexico and Central America. They are city-builders, and as such could develop forms of culture and art which are impossible to rovers. Of the music, the poetry, and the drama which expressed the ideas of the northern Indians it is not easy to speak, for much has been lost, and there remain the difficulties of language, its rhythm and its allusions, which prevent all save a few

from following the ideas as they deserve. And if we ourselves understand them, we do not change the fact that the old conditions for these people have vanished.

In New Mexico and Arizona, on the other hand, we have Indians living in the country very largely according to the customs of their ancestors. Many a person who has admired their work in the Museum of Natural History in New York or the Field Museum in Chicago—to say nothing of the great collections in Europe—has been surprised to learn that these Indians have not degenerated into the tame pensioners of the reservations, but are in the essentials of character, very much what they were in the past. The best proof of this is their art: at its best to-day it is equal to the best they ever produced. All the centuries of contact with white men have not sufficed to blot it out or even to give it the hybrid quality that one finds, for example, with the Hawaiians. The Spaniards conquered the country in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries and priests from their settlements in Mexico taught their faith to the Indians, who are Catholics to-day. But the Church has been content with such acceptance of its tenets as could easily be given by a people who hold to their ancestral mythology and to the arts which express their beliefs of the sun, the clouds, the earth, and their relationships.

So tolerant and gentle was the mingling of the European and American religions that when the Indians painted certain subjects they had learned to know from the Spanish priests, they made a really important addition to Christian art. The Santa Fé Museum has a number of examples of this imagery; in the Brooklyn Museum is a St. Francis that shows in impressive fashion the capability of the Indians to work with a foreign theme. The idea of the work was derived, doubtless, from some decadent specimen of late Spanish painting, for the religious pictures one finds in the region are characteristic "export articles" of the poor quality that has given the term its meaning. Nothing more different from such a model could be imagined than the Indian painting, for the newly aroused race, direct and vigorous in expression, infuses the work with a purity and an austere beauty quite worthy of a European primitive.

As interesting as one must find this type of picture, it is the autochthonic art of the Indians that is important. It attains the dignity that inheres in national and religious things, for it belongs to the whole of the people and informs every phase of their lives, from

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the great ceremonies of prayer and thanksgiving to the making of clothing, ornaments, and the objects of daily use. In reality, there is no break in the continuity of the Indian's thought and art when he goes from the sand-painting before his altar to the decoration of a cooking bowl. The "curio" from the Southwest which gives an exotic note to many a room is not, like its neighbor-there, the old French helmet, a thing whose reason for existence has long since passed; still less it is like the batik hanging now so much in favor where designs are used of whose meaning the decorator knows little and believes less.

No one having even a slight familiarity with the work of the Indians ever has to trouble in distinguishing the things they make according to their own ideas and those they make for the tourist trade. The loss of beauty which the commercialized work exhibits is of course due to the loss of idea. For instance, in the band of decoration the Indian paints around his bowl there must always be a small opening; this means to him the place where spirits pass from the lower to the upper world. But as the white man has no interest in that, or thinks the break in the design an imperfection, the Indian ceases to follow the idea that was alive for him when he worked for his own people. The Hopi potter will never make a vessel of perfect roundness, for the perfect thing is to him the symbol of a life that is finished.

The life of these Southwestern Indians is not yet finished. But how long can it continue? At first the answer would seem so obvious as to make the question an affront if men were not taking measures to-day to consummate our last great wrong against the Indians. It must be our last, for if we "civilize" the Indians of the Southwest, there will be no more tribes possessing an ancient life of which we might deprive them. It is not a matter of preserving the artistic talent of the Americans who have given the best proof that they possess that quality. This is a precious thing, but I have so far discussed their art merely as the exponent of their life, as indeed art is always the thing that tells one most truly the life of a people. Neither is it the tourist who threatens to rob these Southwestern people of their old ideas. If they could stand three centuries of intercourse with the Spaniards, they need not fear the effect of occasional sight-seers from other parts of this country, even with the increasing facility of travel.

It is the government agents who are at the center of the present-day problem of the Indians. The men of the pueblos are wanted as farm-hands, herdsmen, and laborers, the women as domestic servants. As long as the Indians hold to their "heathenish" beliefs, they will stay in their villages and continue their "useless" manner of life. And so the ideas which the Spanish padres allowed to live until now, must be destroyed by the new missionaries of education and industry. Charges of immorality are trumped up against the ancient ceremonies, and no device that could lead to their suppression and the turning of the Indians into useful citizens is considered too ugly for use—the end justifying the means: the end and the means, in fact, being altogether worthy of each other. In some localities the agents have met with success, the first one of their lives, in many cases, for they are frequently men who have failed in other occupations and are sent out to the Indian country to start life anew. Their attitude toward the people under their care may be judged by the remark made by one of them to a well known archaeologist who, like many of his *confrères*, had been advising the Indians against abandoning their old practices. "If it weren't for you damned scientists," said this agent, "we'd soon have the Indians down off the mesas and at work."

This does not accord with the argument that the change in the life of the pueblos is simply the march of progress, the evolution of history, or whatever other phrase we may use to exalt our actions. Perhaps the ancient life is doomed, perhaps we must see the disappearance of the last of the nations we displaced on this continent. There is justification for our past acts in the higher needs of the white race, but no such excuse can be offered for the stupid course that is now being pursued. The Indians ask only to be let alone. Surely it is time for us to realize that even backward peoples have their rights. Undoubtedly we have progressed in our dealing with the Indians; to-day it is more our intelligence that needs quickening than our sense of justice. The important thing is that our new understanding of the problem come about quickly, for we have only a limited time in which to correct our policy. The life of a people is no more to be given back, once it is destroyed, than the life of an individual.

And the white Americans should realize that a new understanding of the Indians is important, not for their sake only, nor that we

may come with a clean conscience to our place in the international council that is to uphold the rights of the weaker peoples. We need to realize that the Indians are not simply our wards, an unfortunate race to whom we owe something, but that there are great things to be learned from them if we save—or permit them to save—their ancient and beautiful culture.

There is more than one voice crying out in the world to-day that in the earlier forms of society values were attained that our present proud condition has lost. One such was noticed lately in these pages, in the review of Dr. Cram's books. If we were forced to a decision that the Mediævalism he asks for is impracticable, especially in view of his lack of understanding of the living and important qualities of our period, we may well accept his reminder of the greatness of the age of faith. The trend of much latter-day thought, indeed, is toward concession that in our struggle for scientific knowledge and material accomplishment we have been overlooking spiritual attainment (one hates to pronounce the words—so generally have they been monopolized by the weaklings of the intellect). But the spiritual thing has been the strong thing again and again in history. And a sign that it may be so once more lies in the evidence that we are coming to realize that in the countries and the periods that are backward in material development there is often a great wealth of intuition as applied to life and the world's relation to it. The Indian is a typical case in point, and his wisdom is not for any "little group of earnest thinkers," as the young lady of the Sunday supplement calls them, but for the whole generation of to-day and of to-morrow. Poets, artists, and those scientists who see that their profession must take heed of æsthetic ideas are naturally the first to become aware of the profound value of the Primitive, but it would be contrary to experience if people in general did not follow the train of thought along which the specialists have led. Once more let us hope that when they have been brought by it, in our own country, to an appreciation of the Indians, they do not find that their study must be conducted from relics in the museums and libraries, but that they may learn from the living people,—the peaceful and contented men and women of the pueblos, whom we may know to-day.

Almost unheard of by the general public, many students are working toward a truer understanding of the Indians. It is a pity that the results of their fascinating researches should go to technical or

university publications instead of to the magazines of large circulation. For if the majority of Americans knew the need of the Indians and what they mean to us, the response to their need would be immeasurably better than it is.

The specialists should lay aside the diffidence that is natural to them when there is a question of popularizing their theme, and use every opportunity to bring the present-day problem of the Indian to general attention. Unfortunately not all such means of approach are available. Last year a proposal was made to the Metropolitan Museum in New York to organize a great exhibition of Indian art for that institution, the aid of distinguished authorities and loans from the most important collections being promised. The directors of the Metropolitan received the offer in a sympathetic spirit and agreed that the showing of a folk-art alive in our country to-day was a matter of great interest. Certain agreements entered into with the Museum of Natural History, however, leave Indian matters to the latter institution, and so the project, at least in so far as it concerned the art museum, had to be given up. Those who had conceived the idea of the exhibition felt that it would lose most of its point if it were held in the Natural History Museum, as the ethnological aspect it must have there would be a matter of no new interest to the general public. What should be the outstanding feature for the lay visitor to the exhibition is the fact that the Indian has produced a genuine and valuable art, and that he is continuing to do so. The exhibition will be held in New York in March, with this point in view, laying more emphasis on the work of to-day than had been planned.

After seeing the modern work of the Indians, we shall be better prepared to go to the collections of the older objects. It is hoped to open to the public this spring one of the greatest of these, at the Museum of the American Indian in New York. Familiar to most of us from childhood as the relics of a savage period, the Indian things reveal themselves in a startlingly new light if we think of them as art. To some it will seem at first that only by an extension of the term can it be applied to the work of the Indians.

Let these people begin a new acquaintance with the sculpture and the architecture of ancient Mexico—the greatest art which has yet been produced in the Western Hemisphere. Americans in Italy have often wondered how it is possible for a people with the work of the

Renaissance on the walls of its old buildings and its museums to produce the lamentable things one sees in the modern Italian exhibitions. The case is not a parallel one here, since we are considering a different race from that which peoples America to-day. None the less, we may feel humble enough if we set anything our sculptors have done beside those great heads and figures of the Mayas—art which may be ranked with that of the Egyptians, the Hindus and the Chinese.

Working southward in his new discovery of America, the student finds an overwhelming treasure of art among the people of Central America; and certainly in the northern part of South America. Expeditions sent out by the Museum of the University of Pennsylvania have recently brought back magnificent pottery made to-day in the Upper Amazon country, as pure and as sure in design as the work that was done by the tribes before the time of Columbus. A climax in American art is reached when we come to the work of the Peruvians. Certain of their paintings (so to style them) made of the brilliant feathers of tropical birds carry the use of color to one of the most remarkable points attained by any artists.

I permit myself to wander so far afield because it is well to reassure ourselves, if only by this summary mention of the accepted and tremendous monuments of Indian art, that in them the red man has shown that his race must be accounted one possessing genius for expression in plastics. To-day no more work of a monumental character is being done, unless it be, as I have heard reported, among the Alaskans.

One characteristic, however, runs through all Indian art, ancient and modern, of monumental or of small size: it has the unbounded sincerity of a free people. If the language of art has any meaning whatsoever, then Indian productions of every type say that their makers believed in them and did them naturally, because they liked what they did. With the North Americans, as with other really primitive peoples, there seems to be no question of period of evolution. The prehistoric mounds of Arizona and New Mexico reveal pottery of a type similar to that which is being made to-day. Many of us prefer the recent work of some of the pueblos to that of their distant forbears. An even more encouraging sign of strength in the Southwestern Indians is that they have been able to use new materials, the water colours which they have obtained from the white

people. This may seem a small thing, but one very frequently finds that the possession of a different material brings in a change in the whole character of the work done with it. Such Indian paintings as I have seen in the new and more complex medium are indeed different from any of the old designs, but they have lost none of the old quality of genuineness. The decadent work done for commercial purposes which I mentioned previously is rather uncommon, and is found in only the few places where the pressure of the white man has finally caused routine performance and a desire for quantity, in place of that satisfaction of instinct which is the secret of Indian life and art.

What noble designs instinct produced on the pottery of the Hopi! As one goes over a collection of several thousand specimens, one is impressed by their really infinite variety. Here are two pictures of the Sun-God, the feathers used in the dance to represent his beard (the rays of the sun) being disposed in almost exactly the same position, the same drawing of the face and the same colours being used, as tradition has dictated. But if the two images were produced by the same artist, they were produced at two different moments of time, and that great faculty the Indian has of following his mood has given to the two works a shade of difference, one from the other, so that both are living things. Old Nampeyo, blind to-day in her Hopi village, has handed on her art to her daughter and to other pupils, and their work may be placed beside that of their ancestors—not because it is exactly like the ancient pieces, but because it keeps up their tradition of life. A little habituation permits us to enter, to a surprising extent, into the significance of the Indian designs. We appreciate the humour which so many observers have noted as a characteristic of this people, we understand the quality of fear certain works are meant to inspire, or we follow the homage to the elements, which is one of the most constant themes of their simple and beautiful pantheism.

With such a basis for his art, with a certainty that every one of his people will understand his work (where is the white artist who can say the same?) it is not strange that what the Indian has in mind he says with naturalness and eloquence. There is no appearance of hesitation, or of correcting. The strokes of his brush are quick and sure; they move in rhythms like those of the dancers or those eagles whose flight the dance symbolizes. Or those figures painted on

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deerskin: the character, the action of the man is rendered with an immediacy for which our painters and poets strive all their lives. The impedimenta of the endlessly complicated art of Europe has, in the later decades, proved such a hindrance to the expression of these simple and powerful ideas that it is small wonder if many men are trying to throw off the load—and if they delight in the work of the Indian, whose swift, sensitive line and grasp of composition yield results near enough to our own for us to understand them,—different enough from our inbred art to give us the special pleasure that comes from things that are new to us. Familiar or strange, the red man's work is beautiful, and in quite the sense of the word that we have always given to it. The black pottery of the Santa Clara pueblo has not the measureless refinement that, in centuries of continuing culture, brought perfection to the Egyptian vases of the later dynasties, but it has the vigour and largeness of design of the very early period of the art of Egypt. And to-day—I come back to the word because what is most important to remember is that this work is still being produced—certain head-dresses, batons, and figures used in the religious ceremonies flame with a magnificence of red and green such as the Hopi country shows in daylight, or glow in pale marvels of white and gray, like the desert under the stars.

THOMAS HARDY

BY ARTHUR SYMONS

THE last letter I had from Hardy—who arrived at the age of eighty on June the second—reached me in the Isle of Wight, a letter which showed how tenaciously he is alive.

11th May, 1919.
Max Gate, Dorchester.

Dear Symons:

I am sorry to say that I was in London only four or five days, so that now your visit to Ventnor ends I am settled down here again, and unable to meet you as you kindly propose. A chance may arise later on.

London was not attractive, the crowds in the streets and trains being wearisome to one no longer young.

Very truly yours,

THOMAS HARDY.

Reading his letter recalled to me the wonderful week I spent with him at Max Gate, Dorchester. He took me all over the wild and ancient and unspoiled Egdon Heath that comes with solemn and tragic splendour into *The Return of the Native*. And as he read me, at night, his verses, there was in his voice something brooding, obscure, tremulous, half-inarticulate, that of one who meditates over man, nature and destiny; and also, in the man and in the way he spoke, that quality which saves his face, in which you see the brain always working, from being painful by a humourous sense of external things which becomes also a kind of intellectual criticism. One of his poems curiously impressed me: *An August Midnight*, crabbed, subtle, and strangely dramatic.

Hardy was always very generous in his praise of my verses. In one of his letters in regard to *The Dynasts* what I shall quote gives a curious insight into his vivid intelligence. "Your theory that verse should be confined to emotional expression is what I used

to hold, and was very uncomfortable under. (I believe that a good many hold it now besides yourself.) What settled it for me was a super-imposed theory, or view; namely, the theory of contiguity, if I may use such a word for it; by which I mean that unemotional writing which has no claim of itself to verse-form may properly be attracted into verse from its nearness to emotional verse in the same piece. Leave alone plays, some of our best lyrics are not lyrical every moment throughout, but the neutral lines are warmed by the remainder. I would even hold that one of Pope's coldest essays in verse would be legitimate as such, if it were a section of a large emotional poem, and not an independent piece."

I shall concern myself here with one of his books of verse and with *The Dynasts*. In *Poems of the Past and Present* almost every poem has something to say, and says it in a slow, twisted, and sometimes enigmatic manner, without obvious charm, but with some arresting quality, not easy to define or to estimate. It is a grey book, with sad-coloured landscapes, its outlook on the race of Portland Bill, that "engulphing, sinister, ghost place," and on "puzzled phantoms" questioning

"What of logic or of truth appears
In tacking Anno Domini to the years."

In his verse there is something brooding, obscure, half-inarticulate, as he meditates on men and destiny. In one of his poems, an ironical song of science, Nature laments that her best amusement, man, has become discontented with her in his self-discontent. Dumb and blind forces speak, conjecture, half awakening out of sleep, turning back lazily to sleep again. Here is a poet who is sorry for nature, who feels the earth and its roots, as if he had sap in his veins instead of blood, and could get closer than any other man to the things of the earth. There is an atmosphere not easily to be found outside this book, a mysterious, almost terrifying atmosphere, which one finds again in the phantom love-poems, the phantom war-poems, and in certain reflective verses. Abstract thought takes form in some given symbol, as in *The Church-BUILDER*, with its architectural imagery, its deliberate building up of spiritual horror. Nearly the whole book shivers with winter.

"The ancient pulse of germ and birth
Was shrunken hard and dry,
And every spirit upon earth
Seemed fervourless as I,"

he tells us in *The Darkling Thrush*, which is a kind of personal parable.

It is his melancholy severity that gives much of its quality to a book otherwise of varying merit. Hardy has never written with flowing rhythms, either in verse or in prose, and his verse often halts or dances in hobnails. But he has studied the technique of verse more carefully than most of his critics seem to be aware of, and he has a command of very difficult metres which, if it were unvarying, would be really remarkable. But his command of his materials is uncertain. He crowds syllables together inharmoniously. He is always experimenting in metrical effects, and he has made some perfectly successful experiments of a very unusual kind; but he is too fond of long lines, in which the cadence gets lost by the way. He sometimes writes gaily and trippingly, as in the delightfully naughty jingle of *The Ruined Maid*, which Congreve could not have done better.

Neither in verse nor in prose is Hardy a master of style. Both in prose and in verse he has interesting things to say, and he can say them in an intensely personal way. He can force words to say exactly what he wants them to. But their subjection is never even willing, they seem to have spite against him because he is stronger than they. That is why they have never given him all their souls along with their services. Some of their magic remains over: his verse does not sing. But so far as it is possible to be a poet without having a singing voice, Hardy is a poet, and a profoundly interesting one.

After Hardy carried out his ambitious design, *The Dynasts*: a Drama in Three Parts, it was easily seen that his instinct was right when he brushed aside the remonstrances of his critics and admirers, and persisted with his plan of making the Napoleonic era the subject of a vast puppet drama. Those who discouraged his enterprise, and wished instead for another *Tess* or *Jude the Obscure*, owned that had this world-drama of *The Dynasts* remained an unrealized dream or a fragment, they would have missed a manifestation of its

author's mind and talent which is a singularly expressive work of art. Intimations of his mournful creed are scattered through the novels; no one, for instance, can read such a book as *The Return of the Native* without suspecting that he is in the presence of a confirmed pessimist, or without feeling that for the writer the forces of nature are no less essential characters of his tales than its men and women, and that behind their seeming violences and caprices is the purpose of an inscrutable will. Hitherto, however, Hardy's thoughts about his race had been revealed more or less unconsciously. In *The Dynasts* his gospel of despair is boldly and deliberately avowed, and forms, as it were, the atmosphere of the tragedy. The increase of self-expression involves no decrease of architectural skill. A drama covering the career of Napoleon was bound to range over an enormous field; yet never has Hardy's constructive genius mastered so completely as in his contest with difficulties arising from mass of material.

The apparatus he employs in connection with these wonderful series of dissolving views is decidedly original. He is fond of transporting his readers to heights in the air whence they can look down on the features of countries like so many Gullivers surveying the agitations of Lilliput. He makes use, too, of sundry dry supernatural characters—Recording Angels and Spirits Ironic and Sinister, Spirits of the Pities and Spirits of the Years—to comment aloud in choric fashion on the pranks of his puppets. He has a way even of turning X-rays, so to speak, upon the stage-crowds to show "brain-tissues of the Immanent Will" pervading them all, and influencing them to achieve its blind purposes. This machinery is serviceable so far as it affords us bird's-eye glances at battles and campaigns and the movements of huge military forces—in so far as it spreads out beneath our feet a relief map of that arena of Europe on which the drama of Napoleon's life was played. It has its disadvantage in that the author often keeps us too far away from the actors to allow of our regarding them as fellow-creatures, and also exacts from us an almost impossible attitude of neutrality.

But not even Hardy can keep up the pose of aloofness which he demands from the student of his play. By degrees the philosopher turns into the sympathetic observer, the pessimist gives place to the indignant humourist; and except when his choruses express the hopeless litany of fatalism, his scenes grow warm with natural emotion.

Each passage is happily selected to contribute its share to the general plan; each is a miniature drama in itself, with its own plot and climax; and it is only the stage directions, as a rule, that remind the spectator that he is "sitting up aloft." At the end of the drama the author tries to set all his scenes in proper focus, and to relate them to eternity—exhibits all the fret and fuss of the Napoleonic pageant as a wrinkle on the face of Time, and Bonaparte himself as but a "plaything in the hands of the Immortals." Fortunately Hardy cannot long deal with human nature without forgetting his theories in his sense of kinship. For though he may show us from some point in mid-air the Grand Army crawling "like a dun-piled caterpillar," back to shame and disintegration from Moscow, he takes us close enough to see all the horrors of that retreat—its episode of gallant soldiers abandoned and driven mad by hunger and frost on the plains of Lithuania. If, again, we watch from the clouds big moves in the game of war, such as the Peninsular campaign, we are permitted to descend and sit by the deathbed of Josephine, and are given in that scene poetry of an exceeding poignancy. Lastly, while Hardy can conjure before us in their due perspective the manœuvres and mutations of the struggle at Waterloo, he allows himself to turn aside from the clash of battle and present a delightful picture of old-world Wessex in which "Boney" is burnt in effigy.

The blank verse of the play is not remarkable; it is of the facile, jog-trot sort, and some indication of its facility is afforded by the fact that it is employed to paraphrase a debate in the House of Commons. Once, however, it rises to heights of eloquence and pathos, in the speech put into the mouth of the dying Josephine. Otherwise it is in the lyrical snatches—in the Wessex girl's song for instance, *My Love's Gone A-fighting*, that Hardy's muse is happiest. Such things as that remind one that it is not only by the wide sweep of his imagination, but also by the occasional capacity he evinces for giving perfect expression to a mood, that the author of *The Dynasts* may call himself a poet.

NINE POEMS

BY EVELYN SCOTT

DESIGNS

I

NIGHT

Fields of black tulips,
And swarms of gold bees
Drinking their bitter honey.

II

NEW MOON

Above the gnarled old tree
That clings to the bleakest side of the mountain,
A torch of ivory and gold;
And across the sky,
The silver print
Of spirit feet,
Fled from the wonder.

III

TROPIC MOON

The glowing anvil,
Beaten by the winds;
Star sparks,
Burning and dying in the heavens;
The furnace glare
Red
On the polished palm leaves.

IV

WINTER MOON

A little white thistle moon
Blown over the cold crags and fens:
A little white thistle moon
Blown across the frozen heather.

AUTUMN NIGHT

The moon is as complacent as a frog.
She sits in the sky like a blind white stone,
And does not even see Love
As she caresses his face
With her contemptuous light.
She reaches her long white shivering fingers into the bowels of men.

Her tender superfluous probing into all that pollutes
Is like the immodesty of the mad.
She is a mad woman holding up her dress
So that her white belly shines.
Haughty,
Impregnable,
Ridiculous,
Silent and white as a debauched queen,
Her ecstasy is that of a cold and sensual child.

She is Death enjoying Life,
Innocently,
Lasciviously.

NARROW FLOWERS

I am a grey lily.
My roots are deep.
I cannot lift my hands
For one thin yellow butterfly.
Yet one night I grew up to a star.
My shade swirled mistily
Seven mountains high.
I lifted my face to another face.
The moon made a burning shadow on my brow.
Washed by the light,
My sharp breasts silvered.
My dance was an arc of mist
From west to east.

THE DEATH OF COLUMBINE

White breast beaten in sea waves,
Hair tangled in foam,
Lonely sky,
Desolate horizon,
Pale and shining clouds:
All this desolate and shining sea is no place for you,
My dead Columbine.

The waves will bite your breast;
And the wind that does not know death from life
Will leap upon you and leer into your eyes
And suck at your dead lips.

Oh, my little Columbine,
You go farther and farther away from me,
Out where there are no ships
And the solemn clouds
Soar across the somber horizon.

AFTER YOUTH

Oh, that mysterious singing sadness of youth,
Exotic colors in the lamp-lit darkness of wet streets,
Musk and roses in the twilight,
The moon in the park like a golden balloon . . .

Then to awaken and find the shadows fled,
And the music gone . . .
Empty, bleak!
My soul has grown very small and shriveled in my body.
It no longer looks out.
It rattles around,
And inside my body it begins to look,
Staring all around inside my body,
Like a crab in a crevice,
Staring with bulging eyes
At the strange place in which it finds itself.

DEVIL'S CRADLE

Black man hanged on a silver tree;
White breast,
White face with blood on it,
Down by the river,
Slow river.
Black man creaks in the wind,
Knees slack.
Brown poppies, melting in the moonlight,
Swerve on glistening stems
Across an endless field
To the music of a blood-white face
And a tired little devil child
Rocked to sleep on a rope.

THE RED CROSS

Antiseptic smells that corrode the nostrils
Crumble me,
Eat me deep,
And my garments disintegrate.
First my nightgown,
Leaving my naked arms and legs disjointed,
Sprawled about the bed in postures meaningless to the
point of obscenity.

My breasts shrivel,
The nipples drawn like withered plums.
To the eyes of the bright young nurse
I am nothing but a dull eye myself,
An eye out of a socket,
Bursting,
Contorted with hideous wisdom.
Eye to eye we fight in the death throes,
Myself and the young nurse.

Her firm crisp aproned breast leans toward the bed
As she smooths the rumpled pillow back
With long cool fingers.

ISOLATION WARD

We are the separate centers of consciousness
Of all the universes.
We vibrate statically on a trillion golden wires.
Our trillion golden fingers twine in the weltering darkness
And grasp tremblingly,
Aware in agony
Of the things we can never know.

IMMORTALITY

Death is a child of stone.
Death is a little white stone goat.
The little goat child dances motionless.
Little kid feet make a circle around the world:
Bas-relief of Death,
Little stone goats capering across the clouds.

Perhaps Death is nearest in the spring.
Then Her flower clouds the woods with white blossoms,
Apple blossoms, quince blossoms,
Pear snow.
These are the flowers that drift in the hair of the dead.
The sun shines on stone eyelids
That melt with light.
This smile is a pale happiness which glows motionless
On the rocky hillside and the long stems of trees.

There are no shadows in this happy light:
The glow beat by little goat hoofs
Chiseled across the clouds in motionless delight,
While suns fade behind crumbling hillsides,
And hungry illusions vanish
In generation after generation.



Courtesy of Daniel Gallery

A BOX OF TRICKS. BY CHARLES DEMUTH

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THE SPIRIT OF THE OLD HOTEL

To Edward

BY JOHN GOULD FLETCHER

THE dining-room was very old. Nothing, one felt, had been altered in it for a century. From the massive silver candelabrum standing exactly in the middle of the buffet with console legs at one end of the room and seeming to overawe the entire space with its gleaming majesty, to the tall Etruscan Wedgwood vases in the lofty window embrasures, all was exactly the same as when old gentlemen in grey beaver hats and black stocks lifted tired, perspiring children out of postchaises, and the mail-coaches for Holyhead rolled past its open door. Nothing had changed, not even the position of the tables. The meals were still punctually ten minutes late, as they had always been; for however near the twentieth century might creep, there was a spirit which guarded the old hotel.

The mail-coaches for Holyhead no longer rolled by the door, and around the corner there was the desolation of empty yawning stables of granite to witness the fact. But the stables had never been torn down, and if any traveller had deliberately entered the hotel to ask "when the 'bus started for Bangor," no one would have known. That was what the old hotel was like! With the movements of such new-fangled matters as 'buses, it naturally had nothing to do; and throughout the green-walled dining-room the meals were conducted with the stately ceremonial of the past. One felt that the same spirit must be brooding over the bedrooms upstairs, for nothing—nothing whatever—had been permitted to disturb it. True, there were waitresses now in the dining-room, but the youngest of these was silver-haired. And they said "good afternoon" in such a manner that one felt certain that they, too, had somehow been trained, cherished, protected by the hotel itself since babyhood.

We had walked into the hotel casually, my companion and I, impelled by curiosity to take lunch in this huge rambling structure with the grey stone columns in the style of the classic revival, facing its entrance. We had been admitted into the "coffee-room" with-

out realizing the magnitude of our trespass. But the spirit of the hotel was not long in putting us into our proper places. As we did not realize the rule about meals' starting late, we were the first to enter the precincts of the great silver candelabrum, where stood the Wedgwood vases, the silver pitchers and sugar-bowls, polished anew every day. We were soon made aware of the fact that taking a meal here was no ordinary matter. Two minutes after our entry a gong sounded, and five minutes later the first of the other guests swept in—a spare, white-haired lady bearing in one hand a dish with a china cover, presumably containing butter, and with the other her bottle of medicine. She took no more notice of us than if we were non-existent; but her companion, a younger woman, similarly equipped with a medicine bottle, cast in our direction a scowl of contempt. The other guests entered later, each making us feel in some subtle way what utter aliens we were.

Among the guests were a number of young children. At a table over to my right, a girl of about three entered, and striving to climb to her place at the table, upset herself, and emitted a strangled howl. I was unable to see exactly what had occurred, but one of the guests near me remarked placidly: "It would have been better to have kept them in the nursery." The tears of the young offender were soon quenched by the father, who carried her instantly out of the room. At another table, a second girl entered, aged about five, bearing a small Union Jack. The flag was carefully arranged in the midst of the flowers on the table, and the child sat bolt upright during the rest of the meal, eating and drinking and making faces over her food with the air of one who was at least forty. It became a theme of fascination to me to note how all the guests grew middle-aged as soon as they entered the room. The spirit of the hotel was at work amongst us, holding us all with easy mastery, subduing us all into the colours of its faded tradition, weaving us all into the same pattern, its unbroken magic tapestry stretching back to the days when men spoke with veiled awe of Nelson and Waterloo.

At the centre table, reserved for special guests, sat a heavy-built muddy-faced young man in sporting tweeds, whom we readily placed, thanks to the eagerness with which two waitresses fluttered about him, as being the baronet, heir to the great estates on the hill, which comprised also the hotel. He was entertaining two guests, a man and woman similarly attired, who bore the unmistakable

signs of not belonging to the landed classes. One of these ventured to ask him a question which I innocently overheard. She said: "What do you think of the League of Nations?" And the heavy-built young man, with the puzzled, half-frightened eyes, replied: "I don't know—it seems mostly upon p-p-paper, doesn't it?"

Even after the other diners had departed, following, as they came, in the silent wake of the spare lady who was dieting, we stayed on, held despite our will by the strange mystic force that had reduced our voices to a whisper and dazzled our eyes. We ordered coffee, to provide ourselves with an excuse for lingering as long as possible; and when the coffee came, after long delay, we sipped the beverage, with its faint taste of burnt grains, with relish, forgetting utterly that a few hundred yards further on lay a thirteenth-century castle, while not many miles away we might penetrate, if we would, into the baptistery of a tenth-century priory. We lingered as long over our coffee as we reasonably could, but our stay was cut short by the watchful waitress, who feared possibly that we might light our cigarettes, and who therefore hurriedly slipped us our bill. So we bade her farewell, with a feeling as if we should like to incline our heads to the great silver candlestick in the shadows of the dark green wall with its slender Grecian colonnade. We left the hotel, and a few hours later found ourselves again, transported as by magic, back to the too familiar surroundings of the twentieth century.

But the sense of the hotel persisted, and that night I had a strange dream. I seemed to be sitting in the same dining-room, still more brilliant with candles, silver, glass, flowers, and flags. The waitresses were gone, and old men in mutton-chop whiskers, knee-breeches and blue tail-coats with brass buttons moved from table to table, noiselessly. Here was sitting a red-faced Marquess with one leg, the star of some unknown Russian order on his breast; over yonder was Castlereagh; at the centre table was the great Duke of Wellington himself. The glasses winked and bubbled with wine, and I watched the diners, rooted to my seat, unable to utter a sound. I knew that this banquet had been arranged somehow for my benefit, though I had not sought to take part in it. Suddenly Wellington rose to his feet. Glaring at me with intense hatred, he lifted his glass. "Drink," thundered his voice—"drink to the salvation of Europe, our Holy Alliance!" I rose—the dream faded away. Outside in the darkness I heard the shriek of the midnight train.

EDITH WHARTON

BY CHARLES K. TRUEBLOOD

MADAME de Treymes' way of expressing her predilection for Durham was to say that he was extremely clever; and casting about to find terms of appreciation for the distinguished persons the reader discovers in Mrs. Wharton's pages, one can probably find none more fit than the dictum that whatever else they may be they are extremely clever. Unqualified, such a remark is slight enough. The characters of any novelist who tends to psychology are likely to be clever, for considerable cleverness in the subject is necessary to psychological interest and some cleverness necessary to any interest. And cleverness must be an elastic term to cover such diverse qualities as the clairvoyance of Mrs. Ansell, or the fastidiousness of Justine Brent, or the polished and brittle worldliness of Mr. Langhope. Again, not all of these persons are extremely clever: Gerty Farish was not clever at all, and Undine Spragg was only clever enough to be extremely fashionable; though here it should be remembered that Gerty Farish was rather patronized by the narrator of her history, and Undine Spragg flayed with satire. Moreover, one cannot take the measure of an author's qualities, say the last word about his work, in a word; even if it were possible, cleverness would probably not be the only discoverable last word about the qualities of Mrs. Wharton. But it is at least an allusion, and as a first word cannot be unserviceable.

One should, therefore, hasten to add that the cleverness of Mrs. Wharton's characters is preëminently a social quality; it is the cleverness of intercourse, which has been its school and is the means of its expression. It would as little prosper in isolation and repay study so as would the originality of Meredith's characters in such case. Mrs. Wharton's characters hardly belong to a novelist of solitude; they are rarely and not long out of sound of each other; almost any two of the leading performers at least would be enough in themselves for a civilization. Their minds are formed to the maze of sophistication, and it is a mark of their complexity that they are

inseparable. They are like actors who have many times rehearsed a piece together and know each other's rôles; as in fact they have repeated together and know the code of amenity until it has become a fine instrument to the hand of their cleverness. They might well be thought of as playing a game, so much are they dependent on their opponents for their effect, so often does the reader desire to applaud their strokes; but it is evidently a serious game they are playing. Their cleverness, thus seen, is considerably fraught with gravity, and as the characters of a novelist whose every word is significant, for whom fantasy and gratuity would be ineptitude, they seem responsible even for their particles of speech. One is tempted to say they feel it; certainly they do not forget the rules of their game: they take many things very gravely, but they would never do or say anything either irrelevant or "heavy."

Great and responsible as their cleverness is, however, the originality which enters into it is dilute. Such a fact is intelligible, for the more concentrated forms of originality are equivalent to genius or eccentricity, neither of which phenomena appears among Mrs. Wharton's characters. These persons, in fact, illustrate the possibilities, remarkably fulfilled really, of responsible cleverness to an artist whose aim is, as one takes Mrs. Wharton's to be, fineness and significance of effect. Their cleverness is vigorous and varied yet controllable and never ineffective. It offsets the gravity of a tragic theme but does not vitiate the representative and typical qualities of those whose chief characteristic it is; such persons may not be the most salient figures possible to fiction, but that they may, and do in these novels, combine importance with sophistication, is not to be denied. And although the art which depicts such characters is likely to be individualistic, it is yet more amenable than hostile to classic principles, for its subject matter is inherently alien to disproportion and deformity: symmetry and absence of angularity are among the most obvious characteristics of clever people. Indeed the cleverness of Mrs. Wharton's characters is not infrequently to be found manifested as sober taste, as excellent sense, of which the conditioning personal quality is less an abundance of originality, a peculiarly mental quality, than soundness of temperament.

Temperament is the soul of cleverness; for while the latter may not in the least, even in its most responsible form, imply intellectual profundity or great force, it does imply a consciousness heightened

and quickened by an abundance of such contacts as are provided only by alert and delicate sensibility, that faculty so impossible to the temperamentally inert. How much the reader discovers in the psychology of Mrs. Wharton's characters of the instantaneous, the non-logical; one finds them intuitive minded, whether he consider the native readiness of Mattie Silver or Ethan Frome, or the infallible trained insight of Mrs. Ansell: they see the matter at a glance or they do not see it ever! The social talent of the great Miss Bart is here worth remembering for the sake of the prominence which a delicate sensibility played in her tactical triumphs; her perceptions were "fine threadlike feelers" that went out to her opponents in the great game she was playing and made her knowledge of their minds and characters almost divination. Indeed by her eminence and excellence—she is the foremost and most typically clever of Mrs. Wharton's characters—she demonstrates the fact that her creator's best insight is her insight into the feminine character, and the feminine side of the masculine character, that her best art appears in the portrayal of the eternal feminine, the most eternal part of which is temperament.

Mrs. Wharton's characters, however, are superior not so much by abundance as by differentiation of temperament; for where the consideration is of such cleverness as they possess, it is evident that mere native sensibility is not a sufficient explanation: there must be a large element of discrimination present. The zenith of cleverness, in fact, is to be reached—and they do reach that rather than any other zenith—only through the intellectualizing of temperament; in which process the intellect has the visible primacy, though feeling is the really urgent power. Two stages in this progress of cleverness can be seen in the artless fervor of Mattie Silver and the fastidiousness of Justine Brent. The difference between these two was really of degree alone: they were alike in that they both felt abundantly; different, in that Justine, as her author said, "felt with her mind." Feeling with their minds is indeed the culmination of their cleverness, the best thing Mrs. Wharton's characters do; it is a more delicate spectacle than simple thinking and a far finer material to the hand of the artist. And thus seen, the sober cleverness of these emancipated young women and poised young men is really their most human quality; it is a real refinement of the most fundamental thing about humanity, namely, its emotions.

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Refinement of feeling, with them, has grown up into a fusion with ethical principle and has given them an aesthetic morality, the effectiveness of which in general is witnessed by the current saying that gentility—which is the code of such morality—is not a thing to be assumed, that it must be a part of character. But this may mean merely that gentility, being a code devised by persons of accomplished feeling for themselves and their coequals, cannot readily be assumed by those who are not also of temperamental quality. Moreover the aspect of gentility as a code is readily seen when the life declines that vitalized it: it then becomes mere ceremony. At its best, however, and we see it so in Mrs. Wharton's best characters, it is an indisseverable ornament of its possessor, like well modulated speech, and is so mistaken for its animating temperament, for the voice that utters it. The refinement of Mrs. Wharton's characters, how from another side it is to be seen as integrity of feeling, could be shown again by reference to Lily Bart. She had no lack of opportunities to secure a field for the fitting exercise of her cleverness; how many times she was on the point of so doing by an alliance with wealthy stupidity, but how many times recoiled because "at heart she despised" a chance of such a sort! She could never quite, even on the edge of ruin, bring herself to sacrifice her integrity of feeling permanently; and although her recoil was as much a matter of fastidiousness as of principle, it was no less energetic for that. Historically, no doubt, this integrity of temperament has its root principles among the old and tried rules of conduct, the fundamental social conventions; but with these individuals such rules are so interfused with the medium feeling in which they are held as no longer to be recognizable as anything so abstract as principles. How much a matter of feeling they are to become is reserved for Ralph Marvell and his family circle of Dagonets and Fairfords to show. This group of people is typical of Mrs. Wharton's favourite finely temperamental sort of person, and they behaved typically toward Undine Spragg's suit for divorce: it was an ugly fact in their lives, but they preserved their integrity of feeling by ignoring it; they turned their backs upon it; they avoided talking and thinking about it; they even made a fatal mistake in dealing with it—all to spare their feelings.

As a matter of fact, among the Dagonets, the Fairfords, the Marvells, the Seldens, the de Chelles, the reader finds himself in an aris-

tocracy of temperament. And when such an aristocracy is not the direct subject of Mrs. Wharton's art, it is her tacit standard, the instrument of her criticism, the secret of her detachment, her weapon of satire. It is not the upper classes merely that she has in mind, but the upper and inner classes; and in her judgments she is identified with them. Her standard is never absent from her work, and is usually held up by a definite bearer, such as Lawrence Selden in *The House of Mirth*; and how many and how determinedly held aloft are the banners of refinement in *The Custom of the Country*! Nearly every active character has one except the imperious and inept heroine, about whom we are kept clear as to the fact that however high she gets in the upper classes she is never of the inner. The advantages which such a preoccupation confers upon Mrs. Wharton's art are obvious and not slight: so, it conforms to the standards of the best taste, for truly there could be no better taste than old Mr. Dagonet's or Charles Bowen's. And hers being a society in which the principles of dignity exclude vagary and extravagance, she is placed well along, by her choice of matter, toward what is every artist's dream: the maximum of effect with the minimum of means. Like her own heroine, Mrs. Leath, she does not often "misplace her strokes."

But while Mrs. Wharton is occupied with an aristocracy chiefly, the reader is obliged to turn to her earliest novel, *The Valley of Decision*, to see her as anything like a historian of manners. And this, while not the least charming of her works, is, on the whole, the least characteristic. Those leisurely Italian journeys, the rich panoramas, the, for her, singularly abundant spectacle of human affairs, the very populousness of the novel in accessory figures—these manifold external impressions are noticed less for their ulterior than their intrinsic value. And there is thus a certain plenitude of graceful exteriorization in the novel, but along with greater charm, less of the acute significance of her best work, less of her very distinct truth of the human heart—and that truth less particularized than one finds it in her later work. It is only when one comes to *The House of Mirth*, *The Fruit of the Tree*, *Sanctuary*, and *Madame de Treymes*, or *The Reef*, that he finds minute interior searching balanced with exteriorization to produce her characteristic art: an economy of strokes done with edged tools, such as fine perceptions and that rather cold but bracing thing, an acute mind, further sensitized by

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If its evidences in her work are justly indicative of its importance, her critical proclivity must be considered as taking nearly as eminent a place among her powers as her creative faculty itself. Although quite as much temperamental as intellectual in the matter it deals with, a preoccupation with the touchstones of educated feeling, a business chiefly of gauging the qualities, the cleverness of persons, it is yet very cool judgement and accompanies her creative power to the end of the chapter. Her characters, the stars at least, share greatly in this power of criticism; it is merely in another capacity of their cleverness that they estimate themselves and their companions with precision. And the accuracy of their judgements is equalled by their finality; they "judge with their characters," which are notable for their stability of principle, for their chief principle, namely, cool and intelligent fineness of feeling, is a remarkable self-preservative. Their very stability is one of the factors entering into their ease of estimation; they are indeed stable—so stable that as they were in the beginning, so they are in the end. Dr. Wyant was an exception, but one suspects in his degeneration an ulterior architectural purpose. Certainly with all their mobility they advance in the same plane; and apparently their movements must remain horizontal, since neither growth nor decay but rather maturity is the condition of their temperamental acumen.

The rather cold fineness of Mrs. Leath is an example of this stability of temperament; her sensitiveness of principle added much to the poignancy of her situation in that it augmented her torture and remained to the end a hopelessly irreconcilable element in her compromise; she was perpetually crucified by the criticism her instinct passed upon the anomalous position which her passion for Darrow compelled her into. Even more notable is the firmness to its principles of Justine Brent's warmer but more highly intellectualized temperament before the heavy shock of old Mr. Langhope's outraged feelings and her husband's involuntary recoil. Justine Brent is in this respect her creator's most distinct figure; no other of Mrs. Wharton's women is so certain of herself; in none is the native power of criticism sounder; in none is the integrity of feeling more absolute; in none is the tragedy much greater. Miss Bart, to whom the reader naturally turns as the most distinguished of Mrs. Whar-

ton's characters, shows ultimately the same infallibility of feeling as her friend the rapid Mrs. Fisher so convincingly testified. "I don't know what to make of her," that lady said; "she works like a slave preparing the ground and sowing the seed, and then when it comes time to harvest she either oversleeps herself or goes on a picnic. . . . Sometimes I think it is because she at heart despises the things she is working for." Miss Bart's power of criticism was indeed very coolly impartial and played over her wealthy acquaintances and herself alike; she knew them and knew herself, and saw their errors and her own with desperate clarity. But however she might menace one aspect of herself with another, her fineness with her cleverness, she did, in spite of herself, "save herself whole from the wreck of her life."

Mrs. Wharton's characters are nearly all preoccupied with that great feat; and some of them, indeed, do so save themselves. Sophy Viner was "ardently honest" with herself and made it the great point of her life to be true to her memory of Darrow. Darrow did not fail to attempt the repair of that breach in his integrity which the indulgence of the gentleman's code had permitted; and it was due to the fineness of their textures and finish if the fragments of his identity repelled further decay when their principle of cohesion was so largely destroyed. John Amherst and Lawrence Selden, Ralph Marvell and Raymond de Chelles are so evidently saved whole that they are saved from the dulness of cold overstability only by their distinction and serious cleverness. The subtly acute drama of *Sanctuary* lies in the saving whole of the fine feeling which Mrs. Peyton had instilled into her son Richard, whose lack of natural fineness had been inherited from his father. Indeed, the likelihood is that they will all be saved whole, for they are protected from excess by the power of their self-criticism; they know themselves; they think with ability and toward the end of preserving their integrity of feeling. Perhaps they have learned their high lessons too well; their fineness is sometimes accompanied by coolness and they are not infrequently critical to the point of satire.

When the question is less of their self-critical quality than of general social judgment, the reader readily remembers the accomplished detachment of Mrs. Ansell. The individual distinction that she achieves through her lens-like social insight—she is not surpassed in this point even by the great Miss Bart—is sufficient nearly to lay

the suspicion that she is a *dea ex machina*. Her practice of tact on every occasion, as the most artificial thing about her, is the mark for ironical animadversions on the part of her author; but her delicate impartiality and the imaginative quality of her judgment command respect. She is unique among even the more eminent of Mrs. Wharton's social critics in combining so exact a capacity for estimation and characterization with apparently so little temptation to use it, ironically. By heredity, by environment, by the force of her own temperament she was with the enemies of John Amherst; yet she understood him as none of them did, certainly as the delicately sarcastic old Mr. Langhope did not. Mr. Langhope was, in fact, even in his silences and omissions, critical to the point of satire; he is not the cleverest of Mrs. Wharton's characters, but he is nearly as typical as any, for he has the generally cool and ironically detached attitude, such as Miss Bart had for the wealthy and stupid Percy Gryce, or as Justine Brent had for Westy Gaines. The security of such an attitude lies in the knowing that one's own sense of fitness is adequate; and of this they are, properly no doubt, sure. These superior persons are distinguished in their field of social criticism, which, if it is transient, is yet an art.

The element of critical detachment contributes traceably to produce the acute definition characteristic of Mrs. Wharton's art. The fiction of few contemporary writers has so much distinctness; it is like that produced by many touches of a fine abrasive or a dilute acid. The edges may sometimes come out too sharp, as in *The Custom of the Country* and the most sardonic of her short stories; but if she does not stop this side satire, if she does not always avoid angularity, she does achieve distinctness. Indeed *Summer*, her latest novel, but one, gives countenance to the idea that the direction of her art is permanently toward impersonal distinctness as the one merit. Apparently her former virtues of fineness, which so well offset the marble-like qualities of her art, are sacrificed to bringing out the edges, which are as clear and hard as those of Kipling at his hardest; it is a not too pleasing change from carving in social ivory to graving in sociological steel. The reader will regret to find that this is the end apparently toward which the acuity of her stories points, though his regret will not be that steel engraving is without worth but that it is worth considerably less than carving. The subject of her fiction has never before been so utterly harsh, or the dis-

tinctness with which it is depicted so boldly detached, so painful to the reader. Distinctness, though, is perhaps the only artistic refuge, except style, from the harsh subject, or that one with which the artist's sympathies are imperfect. One suspects that distinctness has sometimes been her refuge in drawing the masculine character. Aside from the cool, grave cleverness of temperament which is the *primum mobile* of their virtues, her men have distinctness as their chief merit. They are rather more distinct than masculine.

If Mrs. Wharton is anywhere to be found dealing with qualities decidedly masculine, it would be in the case of Ethan Frome. His jealousy was a very little modified and very masculine thing, compared to which the complicated emotion of Owen Leath seems somewhat trifling and the violence of George Dorset somewhat hectic. His rather aboriginal "big talk" is something to smile at, but a manly failing. His confused stammer when his wife caught him in his one fabrication, showed a masculine lack of "suppleness in deceiving," much inferior to George Darrow's capacity for quiet half-truths. His whole simplicity in the hands of his wife sets him apart from the average of Mrs. Wharton's heroes: Mr. Langhope, for instance, was managed by his old friend Mrs. Ansell, but only with difficulty; George Darrow was a subtler person than either Sophy Viner or Mrs. Leath; even the fascinating Miss Bart was not superior to Lawrence Selden; and Justine Brent's benevolent imposition on her husband was possibly less because he was not clever than because she was extremely clever. Ethan's pleasure in his masculine accomplishments, his inarticulateness in the presence of Mattie, his clumsy wit, his gropings after the proper word—such things bespeak a masculine ingenuousness often submerged and sometimes subverted in the calm drawing-rooms that figure in Mrs. Wharton's pages.

On another side, however, he shows the qualities that run counter and ally him with the Dagonets and Fairfords and Madame de Treyms: he has the undeveloped elements of their cool and sober cleverness, their intelligence, their fineness of feeling, their soundness of temperament, and, despite his clumsiness, their delicacy. He tortured himself as to the fancied vulgarity or inappropriateness of the things he said to Mattie Silver; he was at a disadvantage in his quarrel with his wife because of his disgust at its sordidness and venom. At the end he was held back from seeking his freedom by his moral integrity.

"With the sudden perception of the point to which his madness had carried him, the madness fell and he saw his life before him as it was. He was a poor man, the husband of a sickly woman, whom his desertion would leave alone and destitute; and even if he had had the heart to desert her, he could have done so only by deceiving two kindly people who had pitied him.

"He turned and walked slowly back to the farm."

Mrs. Wharton has more distinguished characters than Ethan Frome, more involved and perhaps more spectacularly executed scenes than those grim ones which take place in the cold farmhouse of Starkfield; yet the best of her other work achieves no more tragic proportions, nor more surely brings the reader back to the permanent possibilities of human nature.

Ethan Frome, compared to Mrs. Wharton's other works, although it presents as most obvious the spectacle of a religiously transferred technic, still does not convince the reader of the vital importance of technic. That social criticism which acted as a resolvent of drawing-room involutions and so well expounded the subtleties of the ultra-civilized consciousness, has diminished here, and unobtrusively readapted itself when set to work on the relatively simple souls of Ethan Frome and Mattie Silver. The rich, involved matter which, in Pater's opinion, is the challenge and promise of a fine effect, is no longer here; yet the effect is, and would point the reader to the obvious conclusion that an artist's technic matters less than the quality and quantity of his imagination. And in this all-decisive power Mrs. Wharton has a large share; but it is of the sort better described as having the characteristic of light than of heat. Its images and their relationships seem rather the result of deliberate pause and focus than the blowing up of such a great conflagration as makes the pages of Frank Norris's *Octopus* lurid. Light is a better word than heat to associate with the impersonality and severe detachment of Mrs. Wharton's imagination, with its very rational coolness, with the meagreness of its humour, with its very restrained passion, with its selective tendency to linger upon beauty, with the clarity of its satiric glance.

It seems, indeed, an eminently interior imagination, of which Ethan Frome, as the chief digression from its chosen field, but distinguishes that field more definitely. Topographically, it is not

extensive, for though it ranges through two continents, it moves by an itinerary of drawing-rooms, and the unvarying *terminus ad quem* of its travels is a drawing-room. Its embodied images are indigenous to the drawing-room atmosphere, which, should they walk abroad, remains a fine aura about them, an *air*. The reader could hardly imagine the great Miss Bart "camping out," and would likely suspect that Undine Spragg's scorn of Apex City is the fruit of her first lessons in drawing-room perspective. The distinguished gentlemen and ladies in *The Valley of Decision* are at their best chiefly in noble drawing rooms; the soft panorama of northern Italy described in this novel is viewed evidently with an indoor eye. But this is only to say that Mrs. Wharton's imagination is subjugated by the definite taste of those "old families" whose traditional gentility is still fertilized by hereditary cleverness. The inveteracy of such taste is shown but too well in the mordant irony to which she subjects the merely fashionable section of her world of drawing-rooms. It is too sharp, not as satire, but as art, for its obvious extremity, to which she sometimes pushes it, is caricature. The reader who remembers the first abode of Undine Spragg in New York as the Hotel Stentorian may reasonably reflect that while two such names are well aimed darts at the socially ambitious of America, to spend much of one's skill in such marksmanship, is to deviate from the art of fiction.

And one is not long in concluding that these novels are too specialized to be the epic of America. They are not spacious enough, or populous, or noisy, or grandiloquent, or full enough of "energy divine," although they are powerful in their chosen direction. One is surprised to find in any of them the figure of a captain of finance, but not surprised that when he appears he is on a vacation and that the financial part of his life is lived elsewhere than in the story. Mrs. Wharton's treatment of what to Americans is the greatest of the passions is a shade too mature to fit the American temper well. She is too acute for sentiment, commercialism, and aboriginality, some notes of which apparently must be sounded in the future epic, if we may prognosticate from the vast public appeal of Mrs. Gene Stratton-Porter, the popular magazines, and Jack London. Mrs. Wharton's novels are like the well-gearred social establishments of her own inner circle. Their tone is that of rather cool good sense, fine shades, delicate discrimination, things said without words, of everything that Undine Spragg would take for plain or monotonous

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—in short, of modulated cleverness. Speed, vulgarity, vastness, unconventionality even, if it be excessive, find no place except the ironic in her pages.

The art of fiction would seem by now almost a traditional field for the assertion of feminine emancipation; but if Mrs. Wharton can be said to assert any emancipation at all, it is only that of the individual woman who frees herself by the force of her own character and talent. The emancipation of her sex is a note she does not sound, doubtless because she believes in equality. For evidence of her belief that civilized women are on a practical equality with civilized men is to be found in the irony with which she handles the heroines of the divorce court. That she regards them as both shirkers and imperialists might reasonably be inferred from the fact that she makes Charles Bowen describe Undine Spragg as the product of the "custom of the country,"—the custom, that is, of allowing wives to shirk the responsibility of an intelligent share in their husbands' interests, and further, of allowing them to lay violent hands on fundamental social conventions for the sake of their own convenience, to make their first appeal to what should be the court of last resort. The sharpness of her satire of the vulgar and insensible, the fashionable, the divorced, is significant of the essential conservatism of her regard for the civilized *status quo* and the conventions of educated sensibility. Perhaps her eminence as an artist, joined to the fact that she is a woman, will lead to her being called a New Woman—we are vague about such words. But if she is to be called a New Woman truly, it will be because she is doing a relatively new thing for a New Woman to do: namely, defending some of the oldest things in our civilization.

SELF-GLORIFICATION AND ART

BY MAXWELL BODENHEIM

CERTAIN contemporary critics of literature, when accused of attempting to elevate their individual prejudices into assertions of superior insight, do not wholly deny this charge but insist that self-glorification is the natural and necessary source of all expression. The artist, to them, must inevitably adopt a proudly and firmly upstanding rôle and gratify, in this way, his insistent desire for self-respect. In a broad sense the motive-power of all human acts and words is self-glorification. People must forever shape their expressions in a manner that will reassure them of their right to existence; must continually assign at least a minimum value to these expressions. This fundamental urge toward achieving the striking—something that other men besides the creator will look at and listen to—is the mother of all human movement. But, in some individuals, it exists as a subconscious minimum, and in others it rises to a conscious maximum.

In other words, the degree in which it is present determines whether it is to become a vital and specific element in a human being's actions and voices. In some persons it utterly dominates; in others it struggles for authority, with varying success; and in a few it is merely a passive fundamental, having the same indirect and weakened effect upon their creations that the earth has upon the topmost leaf of a tree. Here the substance of this fundamental is neutralized by its division into many exploring shades—neutralized until it no longer serves as an active influence but dwindles to a passive source.

Man is born not only with a desire for self-glorification but with a longing to evade this self-worship. The exact amount of this opposite longing determines whether he is to resolve into an artist or a financier, and the exact degree in which it resides in his art-activities will decide whether he is to strive for variations in self-satisfaction or for different shades of searching and unpretentious unrest. Every element in man dwells side by side with a contradictory quality and each is continually striving to slay the other. This battle rarely,

if ever, ends in one's naturally overcoming the other. A complexity of environment and chance enters the conflict and imperceptibly turns the tide. Take two youths of almost equal mental potentialities; send one of them to an academic college course and allow the other to browse about, with only indirect guidance, and the first will resolve into a blind acceptance of the past, while the second will be more responsive to experiment and pioneering. Sometimes one or the other will be able to shake off this initial influence, but even then the slow push of different environments and associations can never quite remove this first effect. Every human being contains something which the psychoanalyst or logician cannot utterly explain away. The only label that would fit this hidden depth is "sub-subconscious"—it is the unknown part of every being and often rises to dispute those subconscious qualities which his mind has been able to unearth. No general philosophy has ever been devised that could sweep all individuals into its fundamental claims. At best it must always admit the existence of baffling exceptions and insist that they merely represent puzzling and undiscovered variations springing from its general premises. But the greater plausibility is that man possesses a vast and uncharted area which often enters his active life and refuses to be governed by the set rules of this activity. His mind, however, hesitates to recognize any dispute of its potential supremacy and dismisses the mystery by attempting to include its seeming manifestations in a new formula. But eventually the mystery becomes such an obstructing contradiction that his ingenuity is forced to create an even fresher plausibility in opposition—and thus you have the birth of philosophies. In this way man has elevated self-glorification into an easy and all-inclusive explanation of his undercurrents and has swallowed a bitter pill—the renunciation of his altruistic halo—in order to win another shade of self-assured clarity. He has glorified his premise of self-glorification by changing it from a surface and individual trait to one resting in the depths of all human beings and completely ruling their existence. Thus, he assumes the rôle of a helpless martyr who must dispense with all hopeless efforts at slaying his desire for self-satisfied, rigid rules and his insistence that one trend in expression is indisputably superior to any other. He wins a dominating stagnation and spends the rest of his time in tinkering with the details of his fixed beliefs, so that he may speak with a greater air of authority than the opposite faction

presents. He need no longer regard his self-complacencies with the least hesitation. Entrenched in victorious convictions, he is intent upon giving battle and not upon listening to himself or other people. He cannot admit to himself that he is a mere egotist whose development has exceeded the speed limits; he can only justify himself by asserting that he represents the natural outcome of an inevitable fundamental. If he is a critic, he flogs all artists whose work fails to blend into his masterful outlook; he insists that the delicately fantastic poet should be a philosopher, that the philosopher lacks a delicate spontaneity, that all creations should not be regarded in the light of their apparent aim but should be attacked because they lack something which they did not strive to accomplish. In other words, a note of persistent censure, and not of illuminating appreciation, grips his criticisms. To escape this situation the critic would not be forced to pat all artists on the shoulder and beam with a meaningless impartiality. On the contrary, he could simply ignore all artists whose creations gave him no compelling interest and devote his energies to a searching interpretation of all work commanding his respect. His occupation of knocking down straw dummies throws little light upon the trends and specific limitations of individual artists. Instead of chiding the trend of the artist, the critic should praise or blame it for what it is and present all other trends as something which the artist may have overlooked and not as foundations which he should have attained.

But, alas, if criticism lost its gesture of brilliant infallibility, the professional critic would cease to exist, since he derives his sustenance and authority from pointing to incontrovertible standards. He would have to adopt the rôle of an immersed appreciator appealing to men whose elements resemble his. He would pack up his crate of indisputable laurel wreaths and use in their place a series of friendly handshakes and unheated discussions. Whether a transition of this sort would demand the millennium is beside the question. When the critic looks upon the artist as a stimulating lure or a being to whom he can give no attention, and not as a splendid target, criticism will attain a wide and exhilarating function. At present it is merely the superior voice of those who dwell upon an imaginary mountain peak, but it can be an ardently searching descent into the valley.

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MODERN POETRY

BY MAXWELL BODENHEIM

THIS business of being a poet has never blended into the general mechanism of any Western age save—perhaps—the Hellenic. The poet's air of quietly aloof reverie and his pursuit of an abstract will-o'-the-wisp known as beauty—these things have always excluded him from the rough, back-slapping intercourse of men hardened by trade, warfare, and manual labour. Life has regarded him as an eccentric child and has whipped or pampered him according to its whim. Among the primitive tribes of Europe he was the weakling left behind with the women-folk while his sturdier brothers tilled the soil or slew each other with naïve vehemence. In the Middle Ages he was a wandering troubadour playing under ladies' windows and in the halls of feudal lords for a handful of silver—a childlike vagabond tolerated by drunken men and sensitive, repressed women. And up to a very recent period he has been the protégé of a bourgeoisie which expected him to lull it to sleep with musical alliterations and dainty heart-lacerations, with reverent tears over old and honoured moral falsities, with a flowery eloquence which painted the lily three times over and then placed it in a perfumed urn, with a careful avoidance of terse introspection and the semblances of actual life. Fantasy in his work was welcomed only when it held an undisturbing Mother-Goose obviousness or a meek, moral varnish.

If he observed the aforementioned rules, he was well supplied with food, clothing, money, and the acclaim of the leisure class—all those things which rape the youth of a man and shape it into the bland sterility of premature middle age. If he failed to observe the rules just quoted, life benignly strangled him. And yet he has ever existed because of the very forces and beings seeking to belittle and destroy him.

If every poet could pass through a life in which all of his principal desires germinated into nervous action, very little poetry would be written—it would be lived instead. Written poetry exists because certain elements are forever trying to mutilate and suppress

it—it gains life through fighting for life. There is always an inadequate market for poetry because it rebels against the sleek regularity of its times, against solemn church-going ways, against the high-sounding phrases that are forever seeking to hide the inner reality of things, against tenaciously domineering philosophies—in short, against the entire surface of the life surrounding it.

Poetry is simply the momentary struggle of those few, recurring people who cannot fit their imaginations into the accepted emotional, mental, and social patterns of their age. Poetry is a great cry out of the smooth darkness which isolates people from each other. The poet is not a being separated from his fellow-men in his fundamental substances. He is merely a being in whom the unbroken fundamentals of other men break into myriads of elastic, expanding branches. He exists, in a major sense, to show other men what lies beneath their hard outer skin; to reveal to them the complexities and unfoldings which life has denied them. His is a brilliantly futile, daring attempt to show men the potentialities which forever slumber within them, sometimes breaking out in unconscious flashes; the exploring, resilient delicateness which their lives have almost entirely stifled.

He is the mad, insulted preacher among men—not a preacher in the ordinary sense of the word, not one shouting for some little philosophy, religion, or creed, but one who indirectly tells men what they could have been, by holding his heart and mind up to them like an unconcerned child. If men ever join hands with him, he will cease to exist in his ordinary, past function; he will joyously lead them into a greater restlessness in which their thoughts and emotions, moved by an overwhelming curiosity, will meet each other with the touch that children have when they pat a sand-hill—a simple, careless reaching out for variations in color and form; a restlessness too large and quickly moving to be confined within the narrow lines of any one gesticulating creed. Men are a million miles away from this state, and even the poet is only enclosed by its luring shadows. He spies in men and in himself flashes of a beginning childhood in which forms, colors, and substances take on their actual shapes and throw off the distortions, false grandeurs, and sleekly emotional lies which men have fastened upon them. And he strives, whether he sees the whip striking him or not, to make all things come forth nakedly as wood, stone, light, shadow, curves,

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opacity, warmth, motion, coolness, roughness, smoothness—all things unconnected with that unreality concocted by man to soothe his baffled life. When he uses fantasy he is not violating the reality around him; he is merely splitting this reality into probing variations. Once revealed to itself, the reality of objects finds new shapes within itself by playing with its outward forms.

This is the poetry that has been concentrated into one pointed trend during the last fifteen years. The old emotional eloquence, dramatic ecstasies of phraseology, and suave oratory with which most poets have always addressed birds, trees, flowers, and the lives of men, is disappearing, and in its place there has been born a struggle on the part of the poet to wrestle with the concrete forms about him, and in the heat of this fight suddenly awake to find that he has been gripping different parts of himself. This battle, in which wood becomes wood and stone becomes stone and the poet sees the wood and stone that lie within himself and breaks them into articulate variations—this battle is not a new one. It is a thread running through all Occidental literature; it has been achieved in parts of the Bible, in the sagas of the Norsemen, in the plays of Euripides, in Homer, in novels and plays by Russians and Frenchmen, but not until the last fifteen years has it ever been gathered into a poetic uprising. It is the actual poetry of life, separated from material statistics, honeyed emotional subterfuges, ingenious fiction in which the characters are strained marionettes, and ponderous philosophical dictates. It is the abstracted, impersonal glare of eyes that do not seek to judge, praise, or blame, but are immersed in patiently subtracting and multiplying the bare words, expressions, forms, and colors of life, in order to arrive at the nearest possible approach to the sum total of their essence. The poet must bring to this task the inevitable, sub-conscious prejudices of his individuality and the environments that have stained it, but through completely immersing his energies in an effort to catch the breath, concealed rhythms, and natural substances of men and inanimate life, he can reduce these sub-conscious prejudices to an ever-dwindling minimum or a friendly disputant.

And this attempt to unearth an inner reality which often conflicts with the surface plausibility and visual falseness which men have ever called "reality"—this attempt is the actual dividing line between poetry and prose: a division which contradicts the old one

of precise rhythm and intensely emotional sound veiling reality with a false emphasis. In poetry of this kind a tree is simply a tree—life curving out into the colored mechanism of energy—and not a sweet, shady bower where lovers may sit, or a cool nook for the tired wayfarer, or a happy thought of nature, or a symbol of God's benevolence. This is the poetry that has been crystallized during the last fifteen years in the work of men such as Stephen Crane, Joseph Campbell, Ezra Pound, H.D., Wallace Stevens, Carl Sandburg, Jean de Boscherre, T. S. Eliot, William Carlos Williams, Orrick Johns, and others. And if this poetic division conflicts with the old dictionary definition of poetry, then this definition has become a sterile lie and must inevitably be discarded.

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MAKING HEAVEN SAFE FOR DEMOCRACY

BY HELEN SARD HUGHES

"Oh, worship the King, all glorious above!
Oh, gratefully sing His power and His love!
Our shield and defender, the Ancient of days,
Pavilioned in splendor, and girded with praise."

DO pious congregations now sing it in village and city, as they gather together to render thanks to Almighty God for the end of a world war and the benefits of a democratic peace?

The protestant minister of to-day faces perplexity as he thumbs through the hymnal of his church to make selections suited to the present events. His perplexity is salutary to contemplate, suggesting, as it does, the social archaisms that pervade our hymnology. To find among "old favorites" hymns unmarked by images of autocracy and military sentiment is somewhat hard; to find, except in the Gospel Hymns of the extreme wing of modern Dissenters, sacred songs of service, brotherhood and joyful labor is still more difficult. So we should not feel surprise to-day if from our family pew we all join in singing that fine old war song of Bishop Heber's:

"The Son of God goes forth to war,
A kingly crown to gain;
His blood-red banner streams afar,
Who follows in his train?"

as we celebrate the abdication of emperors, the condign punishment of a militaristic caste, and the prohibition of the red flag of Revolution.

The material of our hymns has come, of course, to a large extent from the Bible. For sentiment and imagery the hymn-writer has ranged through the sacred lore of psalmist and prophet, the gospel narratives, and the epistles of St. Paul, expressing his own personal faith and the faith of his time in terms borrowed from a Hebrew worshipper of a tribal God, from the aggressive promoter of early Christian theology, and more rarely from the comforting words of the Founder of his faith.

This impulse by which the singer selects from the wide wealth of Scriptures specific material suited to his own life and times is more closely linked with other processes of social psychology and national life than is commonly supposed. The fact that he selects images of certain sorts and ignores others shows habitual attitudes and inherited points of view which hold their lesson to-day. For it becomes apparent to any one thoughtfully scanning any standard collection of English hymns and noting their theme and date that in these sacred lyrics can be traced not only characteristic marks of literary movements of the last three centuries, but more than that: salient lines of political and social thought as well.

Note for example the hymns of the nineteenth century—though in the century before it the hymns of Addison, Watts, the Wesleys, and others are equally to the point. The early decades of the nineteenth century were, in world politics, the period of the Napoleonic conquests and defeats, in literature, a period of Romantic triumph; these were years which stirred the emotions of poets secular and religious. These poets expressed the age, its visions, hopes, discouragements, and disillusionments, with a play of imagination which heightened hope and despair, giving significance alike to conceptions vast, fanciful, and remote, and to the minutest details of common life. Wordsworth's glorification of the "little, nameless, unremembered acts of kindness and of love" finds a counterpart in Keble's hymn, "New every morning is the love," simpler and truer than many more pretentious stanzas, more mindful as it is of "the trivial round, the common task" which "brings us daily nearer God."

But in many of the hymns of this time God is regally conceived of as King, God of Battles, a God of Nations, a veritable tribal God, imperial and triumphant. The Christian experience is meanwhile figuratively portrayed in a multitude of hymns, not so often as a pilgrimage or a voyage, but as a strife. Calculated to the increase of holy morale was such a hymn of the Napoleonic era as "Oft in danger, oft in woe," with its stanza:

"Let your drooping hearts be glad:
March in heavenly armor clad;
Fight, nor think the battle long,
Soon shall victory tune your song."

(1812)

Thomas Kelly's hymn after battle is likewise of this time:

"Look, ye saints, the sight is glorious;
 See the 'Man of Sorrows' now;
 From the fight returned victorious,
 Every knee to Him shall bow;
 Crown Him! Crown Him!
 Crowns become the Victor's brow."
 (1809)

Later decades of the same century produced another group of these militaristic hymns. In the 1860's the spirit of Victorian imperialism produced such martial processions as Onward Christian Soldiers, We March, We March, to Victory, and Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord, God of Hosts, Eternal King, and a few years before:

"Stand up, stand up, for Jesus,
 Ye soldiers of the cross!
 Lift high His royal banner,
 It must not suffer loss.
 From victory unto victory,
 His army shall He lead,
 Till every foe is vanquished,
 And Christ is Lord indeed."
 (1858)

The very missionary hymns savor of imperialism and the lure of the White Man's burden. Bishop Heber's From Greenland's Icy Mountains, for instance, rich with the same romantic interest in remote lands that inspired in the same year, 1819, James Montgomery's poem Greenland, exhorts a chosen people "whose souls are lighted with wisdom from on high" to carry to the "heathen in his blindness" their particular brand of religious kultur.

Mingled, moreover, throughout the Victorian period with such hymns of the Church Militant, and with songs of the personal struggle between faith and scientific doubt, are many songs of the other world wherein the weary earth-dweller may forget sorrow and doubt and strife, in pleasant courts above. Some of these hymns are mediaeval in imagery and feeling, akin to the Oxford Movement

similarly engendered. Such hymns of the romantic escape from reality are Bishop Faber's "O Paradise, O Paradise, Who doth not long for rest," and Stone's "Weary of earth and laden with my sin, I look at Heaven and long to enter in." Perhaps to this time also belongs the child's song our mothers used to sing:

"I want to be an angel,
And with the angels stand,
A crown upon my forehead,
A harp within my hand."

Such songs make us pause and consider this heaven of ours which poets and sages have upbuilt out of the meager materials of the Scriptures, a vision kept perennially bright before the eyes of successive generations by such hymns as Mother Dear Jerusalem, Jerusalem My Happy Home, and the modern version of the medieval hymn of St. Bernard of Cluny, Jerusalem the Golden. In such hymns is specifically described that place wherein "no sorrow can be found, nor grief, nor care nor *toil*." In this "sweet and blessed country . . . apostles, martyrs, prophets around their saviour stand," the "king who sitteth on his throne"; and round about for his felicity are "harpers harping on their harps" while "angels evermore do sing." It is somewhat like a bright residential suburb of the universe, "dear land of *rest*," where temptingly the Trees of Life evermore bear fruit by living streams which flow with silver sound through golden streets. To such a Lotus Eaters' Utopia the Christian pilgrim has been taught to look, crying as he journeys through our workaday world:

"Then shall my labors have an end
When I thy joys shall see!"

Was it mere accident that this classic mood found secular expression of exquisite perfection in the Victorian laureate's song of Ulysses' mariners who, "propt on beds of amaranth and moly," sang drowsily:

"All things have rest: why should we toil alone. . . .
O, rest ye, brother mariners, we will not wander more."

And does there not lie contiguous to these ancient lands of rest that
pagan Garden of Proserpine of which Swinburne sang:

"Here, where the world is quiet,
Here, where all troubles seem
Dead winds' and spent waves' riot
In doubtful dreams of dreams,"

It is a garden sought of those who "thank whatever gods there be"

"That even the weariest river
Winds somewhere safe to sea."

Beautiful as apocalyptic vision, but dangerous as a way of life, is the social state which for centuries men have accepted more or less literally as the summum bonum of eternal life, as a just recompense for a variety of good deeds ranging from the ascetic renunciation of "the heavy and the weary weight of all this unintelligible world," to a complete sacrifice of self in some one of the world's lost causes. It is a society of conspicuous leisure and conspicuous waste, idleness, soft white raiment, and the fine arts, wherein the Children of the Heavenly King toil not, neither do they spin, and evince no sympathy for those who do. It is a community such as might tempt a complacent aristocracy and a well-nourished clergy of the Middle Ages, and a little later the materialist, the fanatic dreamer, and (paradoxically enough) the morbid, conscientious, Puritan woman, at the same time that it stirred the primitive imagination of a negro camp-meeting. But less and less does it seem likely to attract in even figurative guise the self-respecting worker of to-day. Nearer to our time are Kipling's jolly mariners who reply:

"Must we sing forevermore
On the windless, glassy floor?
Take back your golden fiddles and we'll beat to open sea!"

So, when we finish making the world safe for democracy, can we not invade our traditional heaven, and dethrone the hierarchical aristocracy of that Kingdom? When on earth we have beaten our swords into ploughshares, having broken down economic barriers and

government by a class, should we not have a heaven which is likewise a democratic state, swept clear of sceptred pomp and triumphant might, where no longer inconsistently "armies of the ransomed saints" to the "ringing of a thousand harps . . . cast crowns before the feet" of a Prince of Peace who sitteth on the right hand of God? For such a spiritual potentate attended with majesty's proper ceremonial and display, such a paternal despot propitiated by offerings of praise and prayer, such a dictator, *rex et imperator*, combining in his own person executive, legislative, and judicial functions, his administration safeguarded by the most ancient and complete system of sedition laws extant, such an imperialistic Commander-in-Chief, Defender of the Faithful and Scourge of the Unbeliever, surely he is not the proper head for the ideal state in this theoretically democratic year of grace, 1920.

And what of the traditional Christian virtues, official passport to heaven: humility, unquestioning obedience, and self-preservation at any cost? These, the cardinal virtues of the loyal subject and the private soldier in autocracy's ranks, may sound archaic and unfamiliar to the citizens of this world, when the millennium by socialists foretold shall have been established upon the earth.

Such anachronisms derived from ancient tribal rituals and mediæval dreams of empire may be in part the cause of the rift between orthodox religion and daily life to-day. The younger generation can be but little impressed by such obsolescent conceptions, whether presented as symbol or substance of reality, which serve only to separate the Church from the State as they know it. The barriers and lines of demarcation which religious instruction has so often constructed between heaven and earth, between one's duty toward God and toward neighbor, have caused heaven, not earth, to suffer in the estimation of youth otherwise quick to see God's handiwork in the firmament and his glory in the heavens—youth with an adolescent eagerness for fellowship and service, prone to see in the earth and every common sight the glory and the freshness of a dream.

That modern realist, too, the Man on the Street—distinguished by a genuine if covert idealism from his brother the Tired Business Man—is blessed with a native spirit of reverence and an inarticulate yearning for an object of devotion, even while he rejects the alien arguments of personal salvation, self-abnegation, and the romantic escape of the other world. To many such, the war seemed

for a time a terrible answer to prayer, supplying an ideal cause, an object of devotion palpable and legitimate according to the code of his own day. It called all men equally to labor, live, or die to make this world a better place where babes unborn might yet have life and have it more abundantly. Some such spiritual renaissance certain of our soldier-poets have sung, especially in the early days of the World War. To men like Rupert Brooke the bugles of war

"Brought us for our dearth
Holiness, lacked so long, and Love, and Pain."

No static heaven, his whose body lies in "some corner of a foreign field," his heart,

"all evil shed away,
A pulse in the eternal mind, no less
Gives somewhere back the thoughts by England given."

Will some one write us, then, new hymns suited to the social order and the reverent dignity of our times? We who can no longer sing

"I'm but a stranger here;
Heaven is my home,"

have sung exultantly the more fitting words of our newest and greatest national song:

"America! America!
God shed his grace on thee,
And crown thy good with brotherhood
From sea to shining sea."

THE LAWYERS KNOW TOO MUCH

BY CARL SANDBURG

The lawyers, Bob, know too much.
They are chums of the books of old John Marshall.
They know it all, what a dead hand wrote,
A stiff dead hand and its knuckles crumbling,
The bones of the fingers a thin white ash.
The lawyers know
a dead man's thoughts too well.

In the heels of the higgling lawyers, Bob,
Too many slippery ifs and buts and howevers,
Too much hereinbefore provided whereas,
Too many doors to go in and out of.

When the lawyers are through
What is there left, Bob?
Can a mouse nibble at it
And find enough to fasten a tooth in?

Why is there always a secret singing
When a lawyer cashes in?
Why does a hearse horse snicker
Hauling a lawyer away?

The work of a bricklayer goes to the blue.
The knack of a mason outlasts a moon.
The hands of a plasterer hold a room together.
The land of a farmer wishes him back again.
Singers of songs and dreamers of plays
Build a house no wind blows over.
The lawyers—tell me why a hearse horse snickers
hauling a lawyer's bones.

A COMPETENT CRITIC

BOOKS IN GENERAL. *By Solomon Eagle. 12mo. 256 pages. Alfred A. Knopf. New York.*

THE author of *Books in General* is a provocative critic and there is something misleading about his method. It looks easy, but it is hard. He begins, for instance, a note on *The Depressed Philanthropist* with the remark:

"I do not see why anyone but myself should be interested in the mere fact that, except in the way of casual reference, I have always avoided writing a line about Mr. John Galsworthy";

and it sounds delightfully casual and neat. But suppose I had begun this review of Solomon Eagle with the suggestion that it can be of no importance to my readers, or to his, but the truth must out that the publication of Solomon Eagle's book has annoyed me immeasurably. Would that have sounded so well? I doubt it. I should have to go on and explain that the reason is not the inadequacy of the book—it is like one of those photographs which never do the subject justice. No. I am annoyed because Solomon Eagle has been writing since 1913 in *The New Statesman* and I am the only person of my acquaintance who has been reading him without interruption in all these years. He has been an exclusive pleasure and I have lost him. He is not exactly a playboy of letters but I feel the pain of his going and, even more, the indelicacy of this public sale of his effects. And such good effects! We cannot all have sonnets written about us, but in our little way we can all be stout, and when we make discoveries we are, like Cortez, inclined to be silent for a space because we want to keep them to ourselves.

I wish I could have kept Solomon Eagle. Resigning him, I lose my private hold on his other self, Mr. J. C. Squire, the most versatile and, I am told, the most influential man of letters in England. Mr. Squire's qualities as a poet are discussed elsewhere; his *Tricks of the Trade* is proof enough that he stands close to Mr. Max Beer-bohm as a parodist (his H. G. Wells, with the haunting refrain

about "the strange welter of sex . . ." is better than Max's Wells, and the combination of Edgar Lee Masters and Gray's *Elegy* produced the matchless line: "the lewd forefathers of the village sleep"). Mr. Squire edited *The New Statesman* in the absence of Mr. Clifford Sharp; he has just founded *The London Mercury*, a monthly review; he writes in *Land and Water* a page of literary criticism similar to that in *The New Statesman* which was the source of this book; and, during the war, he wrote satires, the gayest and the bitterest, and incomparably the best satiric verse which that singularly uninspiring calamity brought forth. The little pamphlet *The Survival of the Fittest* may presently be forgotten; such things have happened. But I should rather have written it than the imperishable works of all our Vigilantes put together. Finally, the same writer who testifies to Mr. Squire's influence informs me that he is about thirty-six years old and is what we should call a college man; and I may add, in the interest of thoroughness, that I have seen a portrait of Mr. Squire and judge that he is not displeasing to the sight.

This is a fairly large circle to draw around so small a center as *Books in General*, but a few points in the circumference are like little lamps throwing their light on Solomon Eagle. For the sum of all this activity is that Mr. Squire is forever a critic; his parodies, his satires, his editorial work, are critical. He seems to be doing many things, but, except for his poetry, he is always doing one thing, and doing that thing very well.

There is no temptation to discuss adventures of souls among masterpieces or the canons of criticism, in setting down the qualities of Solomon Eagle. He does give us the adventures of a curious and curiously stocked mind among trivialities such as music hall lyrics, political songs, *Who's Who*, typographical errors, and Archibald Henderson. He adds sly foot-notes on Thomas Love Peacock, because he is not ready to write at length about him, and on Henry James and James Joyce, possibly because he is paid to write precisely one page each week, possibly because he is writing elsewhere a reasoned history of contemporary English letters; I do not know. I do know that the general effect of this book is one of irritation at so much triviality, and the effect is heightened by the number of good things in the book. In some two hundred and fifty pages there is not a line of slipshod writing nor is there a stupid judge-

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ment set down. There are very few epigrams, and there are pages of fluent and engaging English. What is maddening is for a man to be so right and so agreeable and so careless at once.

The examples of his rightness are everywhere. When *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* was published, Solomon Eagle had just the right word to say about the method: "He is a genuine realist: that is to say, he puts in the exaltations as well as the depressions . . . spiritual passions are as powerful to him as physical passions"; about the style he was equally precise; and of James Joyce's future he wrote: "the discovery of a form is the greatest problem in front of him. It is doubtful if he will make a novelist." To-day, with Ulysses pounding in our ears, what have we to add or to subtract from this? Set Henry James before Solomon Eagle and he will analyze with inspired accuracy the causes of his obscurity. But he will turn hastily from the magnificence of Henry James as a subject and like a good diplomat will cause a diversion, perhaps with the notable poem which contains the lines:

"On firmer ties his joys depend
Who has a faithful female-friend!"

He resents the personal dulness of Wordsworth and he is impatient with Mr. John Galsworthy's dreariness, but that is as near to an emotion as he gets. For the rest, he talks entertainingly about epigrams and table talk and Florence Barclay, on simplified spelling, Anglo-Saxon words, and the Baconian theory.

The entertainment is excellent, but you could never guess that the man has a passion for good English, for clear thinking, for sound philosophy, for wit, for an honest presentation of life, for a thousand good things. Books are almost a wild romance with him. Only a few weeks ago, when a printers' strike threatened in England, he wrote of the books which were already announced:

"But if they did not come out, if they remained unfulfilled promises, I think that in the evenings of those months of our sullen broils they would gradually for me acquire romance. I should begin thinking of them with that acuteness of unsatisfied longing that is evoked by the memory of the great lost books of antiquity and of which one has a tinge when one reads of a work that a great writer

conceived and never carried out. These books, already described with all the circumstance of size and shape, of cloth extra and demy 8vo, would in my imagination creep up, ascending the highest heaven of invention, until they took their place beside the noble and glorious shapes of Sappho's lost lyrics and the unwritten *Arthuriad* of Milton."

It is not fine writing; it is a real passion which has its utterance here. And the passage is not exceptional, although nothing like it has been included in the present collection. At about the same time, Solomon Eagle (or possibly Mr. Squire under his proper name) wrote of Samuel Butler. In a passage in his *Notebooks* Butler belittles human effort on the ground that so little that is new and worthy can be accomplished. The reviewer broke into so sudden, so brief, and so violent a storm of emotion at this, in a world where the few things which are good are perpetually in danger of destruction or decay, that the page of literary notes became for a moment prophetic in its intensity.

Heaven knows we have enough of solemnity and bitterness and fanaticism pushing their way into the quiet pastures of art. And Heaven, if it is as pleasant a place as I like to think it, probably appreciates the few intelligent critics who can write about life and letters without pleading a cause or impressing us with the futility of art while Great Things are going on. For myself I am pleased with Solomon Eagle's frivolity just as I am pleased by Mr. Squire's puns in his satires. And I am complaining only because the other qualities of those satires are lacking here—I mean the enthusiasm and passion and energy which carry all living things a little step beyond mere interest and amusement.

I do not know by what fault of selection they have been omitted from this book. Perhaps Eagle is a spirit naturally British. Perhaps he is one of those whom he himself describes as "the grotesque Englishman who stares at a sunset and then laughs and says it looks like a fried egg" because he is really "bolting in terror from the admission that it looks like the flaming ramparts of the world." The original bearer of the name was hardly that; he was "a poor maniac who, during the Great Plague of London, used to run naked through the streets, with a pan of coals of fire on his head, crying, 'Repent, repent!'" The Solomon Eagle of the book neither

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runs nor cries; and he is naked only in spots. He does not bid us repent, which is a blessing. But I wish he would follow the advice of another English critic and jump for joy, at times.

His urbanity is a nuisance, but if he lacks fervor and intensity in this collection, he has, here and elsewhere, the rarer quality of competence. I do not use the word in the critical sense; "a competent performance" of almost anything usually means one that is barely good enough. In the world of affairs the term has a more flattering meaning and a competent workman is understood to be an uncommonly good one. In law, according to Dr. Johnson, "a competent judge is one who has a right of jurisdiction in the case," and it is precisely in that sense that I call Solomon Eagle competent. He has the right of jurisdiction because he has the material for judgement and the hard mind which will not be abused. He cannot be imposed upon; but unlike those cowardly people who boast of their immunity, he does not go about in perpetual fear of giving a critical farthing to an undeserving beggar. He is generous. He gives the groat or the guinea, according to his mood, but he knows exactly why he gives it. My clearest impression of the last three months' reading of Solomon Eagle is that he likes Sax Rohmer's Fu Manchu stories enormously; he admires their competence; he is amused and entertained by them. And he praises them. But he is no more likely to say that Sax Rohmer is the greatest of English romancers than to deny Euphues or Walter Bagehot or Herrick his due. His ear for the false note is amazingly keen; he detects it whether you are praising the Imagistes or dispraising Shakespeare or suggesting that d'Annunzio could not write. He is amazingly unmoved by literary reputations, even when they are recent. He is notably unconcerned with schools or movements, but he is ready to run them through the rather fine mesh of his mind, and if he doesn't grow boisterous about the good that remains, you must grant him that he never tries to pass off the *faux bon* in its place.

He has discrimination, which is, I suppose, the beginning and the middle and the end of culture. (I know it is the end.) And that is why Solomon Eagle so contentedly stands still. He will have to stand still until intelligence and his rare kind of competence become a movement themselves.

I do not know how or when that will happen, although I should like to behold the gun for cover which might follow the announce-

ment that even so few as ten, let us say, had come together to make a fetish of intelligence. It is simply not the business of most of our critics to judge; they either write reviews to help the sale of a book, or they are above such things and spend their time proving that all contemporary things are bad (which is not a hard thing to do) except the few which belong to the old tradition, or, a few of them, that all ancient and modern things are bad with the exception of the work of John Snaffles and Lydia Hesterby, who are the only geniuses of our time. There are, of course, the critics whose function it is to help drive the world to or from Bolshevism, by the rough road of Arnold Bennett's humanism or the Freudian implications in D. H. Lawrence. They differ from the others only in this, that the others pretend to care about letters. Few of us really do care and it is hard to forgive Solomon Eagle, who does, for pretending that he does not. He has added another to the many books about books; there was no need for him to think of it as a sacred responsibility. You do not have to bring up a book and assure its place in society. But at least he might have admitted that he was happy to do it, and he should have put his best into it. As it is, he will have to publish another.

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JACINTO BENAVENTE

PLAYS, SECOND SERIES. *By Jacinto Benavente. Translated from the Spanish with an introduction by John Garrett Underhill. Illustrated. 12mo. 309 pages. Charles Scribner's Sons. New York.*

IT is a truly Shavian paradox that among contemporary Spanish dramatists should be found the author whose plays are most like the plays of Bernard Shaw. The Spanish playwrights have been influenced only superficially by the intellectual and technical forces that have been shaping the course of the modern drama, and, save for a few emphasizing exceptions, the very plays that are held up as examples of modern Spanish dramatic realism are plays of the classical Spanish plots of blood-and-honour, coated thinly with a very brittle veneer of naturalistic speech and setting. Spain is the last place where one might reasonably expect to discover another Shaw, for Shaw has been the arch-enemy of those same romantic illusions that are the stock-in-trade of Spanish playwrights and the chief protagonist of mental or moral conflict against the physical conflict in which Spanish audiences so delight. And yet Spain's foremost living dramatist is more closely akin to Shaw, both as a thinker and a dramatic craftsman, than any other playwright.

It would, however, be grossly unfair even to infer that Jacinto Benavente is an imitator of Shaw. He is not even a disciple. But there are very obvious similarities in the dialogue and technique of their plays, and the differences in their artistic motives and moral ideals are chiefly due to their different environments and national traditions. It is most convenient, therefore, to compare these two great individualists, although to compare an unknown—and Benavente is all but unknown in America—with a known like Shaw, about whom such debatable opinions are so stoutly maintained, is a critical device fraught with dangers of injustice. It demands at the outset fullest appreciation of Benavente's robust originality, and it makes necessary the clearest possible definition of each basis of comparison.

Spaniards recognize Jacinto Benavente as their greatest modern dramatist. Discerning Spanish critics do not hesitate to rank him

above Echegaray, but the most astute among them have been baffled in making any complete analysis of his philosophy. This is due partly to his attitude towards his work and partly to his astonishing versatility. Like Shaw he is himself a brilliant critic and he delights in his essays and prefaces to astonish and confuse the other critics with startling phrase and paradox. At the close of his Introduction to the Second Series of Benavente's plays, which has just been published, Mr. Underhill appends some of the Spaniard's critical maxims, the Shavian flavour of which is very keen. "Prince Hamlet, although the prototype of doubt, like all sceptics had faith in what was most preposterous: the probability that a theatrical performance would disclose anything." "One-fourth of the morality, rectitude, and sense of justice which an audience brings into the theatre would, if left outside, make the world over into paradise." Another often quoted saying of his is: "I do not make my plays for the public; I make a public for my plays." Again, he once said to a friend, speaking of one of his delightful fairy fantasies, "There is no inner meaning to the play, except the very obvious outer meaning which nobody understands." Such statements are just as disconcerting to serious-minded critics in Spain as in England or America.

Nevertheless, in the very midst of his most perverse epigrams he consistently reveals an honest disgust with all shams and poses and a very firm belief in democracy. As an author, his prodigious industry is the very antithesis of the dilettante airs and graces that some of his contemporaries assume, and he mocks to scorn the self-styled genius and his talks of moods and inspirations. As a literary critic, his *bête noire* is the parlour drama whose failure on the stage is explained away by saying that it is too intellectual or too artistic for the populace. As an interpreter of life, in his own plays he holds fast to this same hatred of all forms of hypocrisy and this same faith in the ultimate good judgement of the people. In *The Evil Doers of Good*, his clever satire of organized charity, his mouthpiece, Don Heliodoro, exclaims passionately:

"You are not handing out alms for nothing. All that you demand in return is a profession of faith, an oath of absolute allegiance, social, religious, political, sentimental—yes, even sentimental. You are shocked when you find someone who is not willing to sell his soul, his most cherished beliefs, for whatever you are willing to give

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him as charity, and let me tell you this—there are fewer poor men than gentlemen of the upper classes who will do it. You think that you are encouraging virtue, but what you are really doing is promoting hypocrisy. You think that you are educating the masses: you are holding out a piece of candy in one hand and hiding a ruler in the other hand behind your back.”

There is no need to call attention to the Shavian qualities of the speech or of the thought behind it, but it is significant that almost without exception Benavente's satirical comedies, and these are the most popular and the most important of his plays, are based upon some sham of contemporary Spanish society. It is a society very different from ours, different in form and based upon a different social order, but many of the shams he exposes are universal. *La Gata de Angora* holds up to view the idle, pampered, useless woman of great wealth, the Angora cat as the title calls her, as pretty, as selfish, and as cruel. *Lo Cursi* reveals the ugliness of the modern marriage of convenience. *La Comida de las Fieras* strips bare the empty pretensions of the wicked, decayed nobility. And so on, through a whole series of over forty brilliant plays, Benavente has satirized the false and the undemocratic in the upper and middle classes of Spanish society. He is the first specialist of the land in this particular field, and though he has several imitators, as yet no worthy rival has appeared.

Much of the success of his satires is due to the skill with which, in the same play, he will balance frailties and vices with strengths and virtues. His characters are always an intimate mixture of goodness and badness, and while he never leaves a doubt as to their exact place in his satire, still they are easily recognizable as people from the workaday world. He finds no delight in running the sharp blade of his wit through a poor dummy stuffed with disagreeable traits, but he rejoices to make a red-blooded knave or a pious shrew ridiculous. His specialist's point of view is narrow, but the result he achieves in his plays has something of the breadth of that greatest of Spanish satires, *Don Quixote*. The best Spanish literature has always been national, and it seems to become universal only when its national spirit, as in Cervantes' novel, is most intensified. This holds good of Benavente's satirical comedies. He attacks an undemocratic, uncommercialized society, and an American winces at

his thrusts. His sincerity and keen insight into Spanish character enable him to reveal human beings that we recognize readily under their unfamiliar national costumes.

Like Shaw, Benavente is no respecter of his audiences' feelings. He apparently enjoys shattering fond illusions, nor does he spare individuals, even the most powerful. In so closely knit a country as Spain it is remarkable that the work of a vigorous, active free-thinker who has taken his place in the world of affairs has not degenerated into mere personal lampoon. It is not that Benavente has lacked the courage, for in Catholic Spain it is just as dangerous to attack the cherished conventions of caste and religion as it is in Puritan England to show that democracy can be tyrannical or marriage unhappy, and Benavente has not hesitated to satirize with particular gusto outworn ideas of personal and family honor, conventional moral hypocrisy, and devout wickedness.

It is said of this Spanish playwright, as it has been said of Bernard Shaw, that he has no higher aim than to be the super-clever popular playwright of his day; that he is utterly frivolous; that he lacks that stability which belief in any carefully thought out and firmly held philosophy would give him. It is true that we read his satirical comedies in vain if we look for the kindly admonitions of a great moral teacher; neither do we find in them the clarion calls to action of the social revolutionist. There are none of the continental dramatists' bitter criticisms of contemporary life in his plays — nor, it must be added, any of the comforting encouragement of popular modern philosophers. He does not exhort; he does not preach; he does not advise. He is content to show us some particular phase of life as he himself sees it, and then he leaves us to draw our own conclusions. He does this deliberately, not as a refuge for mediocrity, but because he is convinced that the true function of the drama is to picture life on the stage, and he accomplishes his purpose so well that he wins at once extravagant blame and praise. He is blamed unjustly for lack of a serious purpose, and so lifelike are his portraits that he has been over-praised as a student of character.

These confused estimates of his work have been fostered by Benavente himself. A dramatist to the core, he appreciates keenly the theatric effect, and he uses his powers spectacularly to arrest the attention of his fellow countrymen. He is too sensible and too honest to don a cloak of sobriety which would be unbecoming and un-

comfortable. He chooses deliberately the bespangled tights of the professional acrobat, and so garbed he turns his handsprings with a nimble dexterity that hides his skill and strength. Benavente does not underestimate his own powers. Rather the reverse—he sometimes confuses his remarkably keen observation with interpretation. Benavente does not, however, misuse his powers, for, if he does not recognize limits to his native abilities, he appreciates finely how to apply them most effectively.

Much of the great effectiveness of Benavente's plays, both in the printed page and upon the stage, depends upon his dialogue, and the selection of the pieces in the new Second Series has been very happy in showing this characteristic of his at its best. Indeed, the little one-act sketch, *No Smoking*, is a perfect example of dialogue, for dialogue is all that there is. Few dramatists are able to make dialogue accomplish so many things at one time as he, and it is not unusual to find single speeches that are at once clever *bons mots*, a keen revelation of character, and useful exposition of the plot. Such a speech is Theodoro's in *The Governor's Wife*: "In such matters I make it a rule to follow the catechism: the sacraments all in their proper order. Marriage comes seventh, after extreme unction." This uncanny skill in dialogue quickens his plays with the very breath of life. There are apparently no explanations—certainly no dreary, talky explanations or obvious exchanges of confidences for the enlightenment of the audience—and no quips or witticisms are tied to the characters like balls and tinsel on a Christmas tree. The best of Benavente's claims as a depicter of character rest upon his capabilities as a revealer of motives through speeches. Literally his people are convicted out of their own mouths, and this is surely one of the rare gifts of the dramatic genius.

In contradistinction to Shaw, Benavente is without any social conscience. It is impossible to imagine him as a member of any Spanish Fabian Society, and while he might well have written a Spanish Widowers' Houses, still it would not have been from any sociological motive. The point of his attack is the individual, and his plays have a social significance only because he does not waste time attacking unique specimens of tyranny, fraud, or deception. He certainly has to forego the prestige that attaches itself to every social reformer, but the effect of his work, especially in Spain, is increased by the mere fact that it is without avowed social purpose.

That he avoids the cramped exaggeration which his intense interest in the individual and comparative indifference to mass problems make so easy for him is the best evidence of the real quality of his genius as a dramatist. His splendid, almost Anglo-Saxon, sense of fair play has been both a source of inspiration and a balance to prevent his satires swinging into lampoons.

Changes in the thought of a people are subtle and difficult to appraise, and, while we cannot measure the effect now, the plays of this most popular dramatist are undoubtedly sociological forces at work in Spain to-day. Their effect upon contemporary Spanish drama, however, is very apparent, and at least two of the best known writers of these plays are men of serious social purpose. Although the classical drama of theatrical romanticism, which has held the stage of Spain in various forms since the Golden Age of Lope de Vega and Calderon, was killed in the revolt of 1890, still its spirit lives, and Benavente is the first Spanish dramatist to write plays conceived in the modern spirit and executed in modern technique. Especially is their effect felt upon the young playwrights who are following the path to serious social drama blazed by Galdós and Joaquín Dicenta.

WILLIAMS HAYNES.

A CASUAL VIRTUIST

THE QUEEN OF CHINA AND OTHER POEMS. By Edward Shanks. 12mo. 240 pages. Alfred A. Knopf. New York.

IF those who believe in being cultivated and casual at the same time could have a special poetry, *The Queen of China and Other Poems* should find some place in it. The imagery of these poems is not startling—carefully so—nor exquisite; yet it is prosperous. If there are some hints at *lèse-morality*, the taste is yet uniformly good. The poems avoid tangential originality; they multiply the things they do not say; their moods are well found, and their terms of expression are developed from good traditions; their verse impressions, to a degree, are those of comeliness and comity. The lines are pleased and pleasant, not casuistical but still not unstudied—always and carefully fluent. Mr. Shanks is considerate with his felicities; he is intelligible as well as sensuous. He is grave and gay—moderately; and especially he is not betrayed readily into lines that were better unwritten.

He does not profess the steep enormous moods; nor is he especially attentive to the subtleties of the spirit. In fact, to anyone accustomed to Browning these poems will seem rather inadequate as a record of the heart's seasons. Yet he has apparently an affluence of the powers that make for competent lines, and he shows on occasion a fine gravity.

He shows most, from verse to verse and page to page, profit taken from the study of poetry as it is not usually studied—the study of it not as versification or metaphor, but as modulation. The far, imported idea and the rare, rich image are rare indeed on his page. His care seems to be for flexibility and inflection, those essential and inimitable parts of the expressive mechanism. And surely of all such preoccupations and studies this is the soundest and least liable to asininity; it cannot be pursued mechanically or fanatically; it is subject to a sense of proportion in its student, who cannot master its possibilities except with just intelligence and the finest attention.

Intelligence and fine attention are perhaps the main merits of these poems. There is to be found in them surely very little especially penetrating consideration or poignant vision of life; such matters seem not to be the object of Mr. Shanks's intention. He is clear-minded; he is consciously cultivated; he is at ease and free. But he does not attempt the fixing of any horizon-stretching ideas or the impingement of any tall ideals. And in the exercise of the poet's particular mightiness, the making of metaphors and visions, cities, creatures, life, he seems graciously rather than greatly engaged. But he thus never exhausts himself and on every occasion chooses his best. His quality is not strained; he is careful and wise as to his limits, and does those things only which he can do evenly and easily. He is studious, as he should be, in the economy of means, in the employment of unostentatious materials, in refinding the endless new textures in old plain-song meanings, in restoring the lost edges of ordinary expression, in revelation of the forgotten face of usual and necessary words. In this and in a certain combination of modesty and ease he might be called a *virtuist*; for further studies of this sort should probably lead to the classic offhand excellence of the virtuoso. He has lines that surely seem written in the thought of the final fine cleanness of virtuosity.

"The well made sonnet takes the azure sea
Proud in her beauty as a halcyon,
Her timbers chosen words, and melody
Filling her sails of rhyme."

The especial creative virtues of these poems seem to be intelligence and attention rather than emotion and imagination, partly for the reason that in them command of wholes seems not commensurate with finish of parts. The second longest poem in the volume, *The Fireless Town*, is crowded with excellent parts, but seems rather of relative consequence totally. *The Queen of China* is a better poem, surely a better long poem, for the reason that its parts are constrained for the sake of its total effect. As a whole the volume does not request praise so much for imagination or full emotion as for the slight and unintrusive many things done, the discovered multitude of half-secrets that promote the study of comeliness.

CHARLES KAY.

AN ILLUSTRATOR

PRINTS AND DRAWINGS BY FRANK BRANGWYN: WITH
SOME OTHER PHASES OF HIS ART. *By Walter Shaw
Sparrow. Illustrated. 4to. 288 pages. John Lane
Company. New York.*

PRINTS and Drawings by Frank Brangwyn is Mr. Walter Shaw Sparrow's second tribute to his master. The value of the book lies in its numerous and excellent reproductions; the text is almost unreadable. The author is apparently incapable of close thinking or criticism; his discursive sentences are clogged with allusions that have no bearing on his subject and with tiresome expressions of puerile flattery. One searches in vain for a single penetrating opinion on art: to Mr. Sparrow, Brangwyn is the faultless painter, and in his slow periphrastic style he tells us, with many a quotation from Shakespeare, whom he calls the "world-brain," that the Welsh artist is the "lineal descendant of Titian, Tintoret, Michael Angelo, Rubens, and Velazquez." There are other statements equally astonishing, as, for example, those concerning the modern men—he speaks of "Cezanne, to a certain extent a pupil of Paul Gauguin," of the "embryonic art of Matisse," and of Gauguin as "an original colourist with a pleasant note in decoration." It is a crime to victimize Brangwyn in so expensive and elaborate a fashion—the text should be deleted and the illustrations published separately with simple explanatory notes.

In every art we find men who seem predestined to "success," men who achieve recognition early and hold it during a lifetime; who love the pomp of oratory, the grammar of pigment and the theatrical phrase; who attempt all things in the province of their respective arts and carry them off with gusto and skill; who maintain a high uniformity of excellence, and yet who add but little to creative wealth. In this category we may put Disraeli, Lord Lytton, Henry Irving, Besnard, Zuloaga, and Sargent; and here in all fairness we must place Brangwyn. At fifteen he was praised by William Morris; at seventeen he was hung in the Royal Academy. He has proved equally facile with the brush or the burin. He has appeared by turn as a mural decorator, a book illustrator, a water-colourist, a

designer of interiors, a maker of book-plates, a lithographer, a marine painter, and an engraver; he has been everywhere and is known everywhere; he has innumerable medals and honours; and now at the age of fifty-two the list of his collected works would fill a volume. But his productions are not likely to endure: he is distinguished by an athletic virtuosity in surface effects and by an unrivalled versatility; his work is never informed by the profounder human emotions—it is void of great and solid beauty.

Brangwyn has no sense of composition—he has an extraordinary talent for dramatic arrangements. Complete unity of design obtained by the subordination of the integral parts to the whole, by the interdependence of the parts linearly and voluminally, he does not understand and seldom attempts. In his oil paintings, particularly his huge and ambitious works, the eye wanders from mass to mass, from group to group, unable to find a point of repose or a centre of balance. To counteract this grave defect he relies upon subject matter, always choosing a scene definitely illustrative and striking; the spectator is momentarily deceived, but once the extraneous interest is satisfied the entire content of the picture is exhausted, and the canvas fails to induce a second examination. Compare *The Departure of Columbus* with *Inter Artes et Naturam* by Puvis de Chavannes. Brangwyn's decoration is crowded with figures; his desire was apparently to get as many people as possible into a given space, and as a result the picture, for all its magnitude, looks small and incomplete. The Frenchman's panel is an example of perfect elimination of unessentials—each figure is absolutely necessary to the design. One of Brangwyn's favorite devices is the collocation of figures in rows, a clever scheme when employed to emphasize an event, and used on many occasions by the artist to bring home to us the significance of cruelty or tragedy. But look at these arrangements carefully—they have a finished technical symmetry, an appeal legitimate and moving like a frieze, but they are not composed. Nine times out of ten the attention of the observer is drawn to the foreground and held there; back of a line of heavy masses there is a waste of vague spotting and scattered shadows—effective, no doubt, but unsatisfying.

One of the greatest benefits conferred on art by modern painting is the use of pure colour. It has rehabilitated the pictorial vision; it has led to violent scientific conclusions and crazy applications, and

with many of the youthful artists it is a sort of diathesis. Their formula is:

"Colour is form, form colour—that is all
Ye know of art and all ye need to know."

Pure colour may serve two purposes, either as flat decoration, as in Gauguin, or to intensify form, as in Cézanne. Brangwyn, whose mind is not speculative, has not investigated recent pigmental developments nor explored their intricacies, and judged by old or new methods, he cannot be called a colourist. His travels in the East and in Spain and his tendency toward tropical splendour have instilled in him a love for barbaric contrasts. His colour is brilliant and harsh, never rich and harmonious; it is theatrical and thin—laid on as costumes for his figures—never to strengthen tissue or to increase palpability and depth. One of his most characteristic pictures, *The Brass Shop*, is a dazzling array of hot and shining textures. The pots and pans glisten like mirrors but the colour is superficial—it ends in reflection and not in volume. Compare it with Renoir's handling of still-life, or with Cézanne's, and you will see the difference between illustration of the highest type and art, between the metallic luster of swaggering talent and the luminous strength of genius. Some of his earlier water-colours, done in a grey palette under the influence of Whistler, are free from his usual fiery style; the colour is charming and the drawing good, and we find none of the tricks of the professional decorator of town halls.

Brangwyn is frequently linked with Rubens, a painter with whom he shares not one aesthetic quality. He resembles the Flemish master in his zeal for large canvases and in his fine enthusiasm, but the resemblance goes no farther. Rubens is the greatest composer the world has ever seen. His knowledge of the nude in action, his inexhaustible variety in types of composition, and his colossal command of plastic drawing make the work of most of his successors seem paltering and effeminate. Now bring in "*Brangwyn at his best*" (Mr. Walter Shaw Sparrow's familiar phrase), and he remains the big boy of the art school. Brangwyn's academic draughtsmanship is generally disguised by the garb of the navvy, the buccaneer, and the soldier. Let us divest it of the trappings that lend a documentary interest and approach it from the ruthless standard of formal order. He has rarely painted the undraped animal, but

on one occasion he set out to construct a masterpiece in the higher manner. The picture is entitled Mars and Venus and should be viewed by all who think Brangwyn descended from the old masters. The figures are sprawling and unrelated; the deities are swarthy Orientals, so conceived to rouse an adventitious interest, and the drawing is flat and academic. His painting of the nude is something like Zorn and more like Zuloaga, but not so forceful as either; and to look at Mars and Venus and then to turn to Rubens' Perseus and Andromeda (1615) is almost as reasonable as to compare Daniel Chester French with Michael Angelo.

When he began to etch, Brangwyn, with a predilection for the grandiose, was dissatisfied with the smallness of the conventional plates and caused metal sheets to be made several times larger than the ordinary size. This is typical—too often has he mistaken size for strength, productivity for creative energy. As an etcher he has remarkable gifts (his biographer tells us that he scratches his plates directly from nature), and for sheer ability to render the sordid phases of penury, or the aspect of old and crumbling towns, he is unequalled. But he cannot simplify like Millet; while Rembrandt, on a small plate by means of a few perfectly apportioned patches of black and white and a minimum of lines summarizing his great knowledge of the human figure, made etchings that take all the life out of Brangwyn's pretentious studies and relegate them to their proper environment, the walls of the Academy and the fashionable shops in Fifth Avenue.

Brangwyn is at his best in his lithographs, wood-cuts, and small drawings in black and white. British art has always been rich in book-plates and illustrations for ballads and fairy tales: Rowlandson, Blake, Millais, Rossetti, and Beardsley have raised this form of decoration to a dignity and distinction not found on the Continent or elsewhere, and Brangwyn carries on the tradition with some of the skill and artistry of his predecessors. There is a trace of Morris in his designs, but they are in no respect imitative, and are executed with surpassing cleverness, both in the disposition of the blacks and whites and in the delicate feeling for form in outline. In no other branch of this work has he managed his lines with sensitivity, and though there is not, technically speaking, organization, there is a certain structure and stability. Most of these wood-cuts are done at times when he has no inclination to be monumental and impres-

sive and it is to be regretted that he does not devote more of his energy to small and genuinely decorative drawings.

His part in the late war must not be overlooked—he is the only man that made tolerable posters. The British Government, through some freakish catholicity, commissioned Vorticists along with Academicians to immortalize the shambles, but its street displays were even worse than our own. The French work was commonplace: Sem and Steinlen hacked out the best appeals in the conventional style—the modernists were strangely silent. America entrusted her responsibilities to a bureau of head-hunters, and we had to put up with epicene madonnas begging for money, and with the smooth bloodless dolls that adorn the covers of the sensational magazines. Brangwyn's adventuresome nature and his hatred of cruelty fitted him well for the task. He attacked the subject with restless eagerness and his lithographs are powerful and to the point. As art they leave much to be desired—often his drawing is concentrated on two duelling soldiers in the foreground, and in the distance a swarming legion that would be more effective as an unbroken mass, but as posters to depict the primeval madness of nations and the suffering of non-combatants they are inimitable.

Brangwyn will live not as a great creator but as a picturesque semi-realist and an illustrator of heroic proportions. Though an eclectic, his many borrowings are submerged by a strong personality, by a muscularity of drawing that makes him always individual. Like all men heavily endowed he has paid the penalty for his gifts and has never raised any department of art to the high pitch of original genius. He has accomplished what is impossible to the photographer and beyond the realm of the pure creator—he has given graphic expression to current events and made valuable records of the mechanical activities of the day, the building of ships, the subservience of man to machines, the sanguinary stupidities, and the like. In another way he has been of immeasurable service: he has put his work before the public and made it a living force; he has demonstrated, to the discouragement of the solitary painter, that it is possible for pictures to find a vast audience. Competent men of his stature do more toward the popularization of art than any amount of special pleading—they help to build up a background from which the man of genius may emerge. Brangwyn is the best of living illustrators.

THOMAS JEWELL CRAVEN.

AN ENGLISH LYRIST

POEMS: FIRST SERIES. By J. C. Squire. 12mo. 115 pages. Alfred A. Knopf. New York.

THE business of poetry, like any other, has its minor difficulties which are hardly ever appreciated by the laity; and not the least of these is the question as to what you shall call your book when you have got it together. At the outset of a career, the problem is comparatively simple. You can call your first book, with chaste simplicity, *Poems*, and the second, if you will, *New Poems*. And at the end of a career simplicity returns. If you think you have really finished, you can issue your *Collected Poems* and be done with it; and your literary executors can truthfully call the volume *they* publish, *Complete Poems*. But the intermediate stages are not so easy. You can call your third volume *Ode to Marshal Foch and Other Poems*, or, more imaginatively, *Bread and Nightingales*; but I confess that neither alternative appeals to me very strongly. And if you want to halt and collect all you have done, weeding out the useless and rearranging the rest, before going on, what are you going to call the result?

These reflections have been provoked in me by the almost pathetic preface which Mr. J. C. Squire has written for his *Poems: First Series*. The problem has filled him with perplexity:

"Had the volume been called — and *Other Poems* it might have given a false impression that its contents were entirely new. Had it been called *Collected Poems* the equally false impression might have been given that there was something of finality about it. The title selected seemed best to convey both the fact that it was a collection and that, under Providence, other (and, let us hope, superior) collections will follow it."

The solution is not an unhappy one; and the readers of this volume will receive with pleasure the promise of others to come. The suggestion that its successors will probably be poetically superior to it is

well borne out by the book itself, which shows a current of consistent improvement from 1905 to 1917.

One of the most significant signs of this improvement seems to me to be the charming Song, which was written sometime in 1917:

"Eyes like flowers and falling hair
Seldom seen nor ever long,
Then I did not know you were
Destined subject for a song:
Sharing your unconsciousness
Of your double loveliness,
Unaware how fair you were,
Peaceful eyes and shadowy hair.

"Only, now your beauty falls
Sweetly on some other place,
Lonely reverie recalls
More than anything your face;
Any idle hour may find
Stealing on my captured mind,
Faintly merging from the air,
Eyes like flowers and falling hair."

I do not suggest that this piece is in itself of vast importance or by any means the best thing that Mr. Squire has written. But compare it with what he was writing in 1912:

"Than farthest stars more distant,
A mile more,
A mile more,
A voice cries on insistent:
'You may smile more if you will;

" 'You may sing too and spring too;
But numb at last
And dumb at last,
Whatever port you cling to,
You must come at last to a hill.

" 'And never a man, you'll find there
 To take your hand
 And shake your hand;
 But when you go behind there
 You must make your hand a sword,

" 'To fence with a foeman swarthy
 And swink there
 Nor shrink there,
 Though cowardly and worthy
 Must drink there one reward.' "

I have purposely so chosen as to make the contrast as glaring as possible; but the contrast is implicit, though not always so obvious, between Mr. Squire's early work and his later work. He used to be an elaborate, complicated, abstruse, and difficult poet; and in the process of years, without losing his power or subtlety, he has gained in simplicity and much increased his range. The later of these two pieces, individual in feeling and rhythm, is still a lyric almost in the Elizabethan tradition. The earlier piece is one which betrays in form and language the author's too great consciousness of his own singularity of feeling.

I do not suggest that Mr. Squire, however his development proceeds, will ever fall into the ordinary tradition of English poetry. He is by nature, I think, mostly a rather aloof, difficult, and austere poet. But this fact has ceased to make him angular, awkward, and gymnastic in expression. The piece which I consider to be his best, *The Stronghold*, moves in a sufficiently rarefied atmosphere of thought:

"Quieter than any twilight
 Shed over earth's last deserts,
 Quiet and vast and shadowless
 Is that unfounded keep,
 Higher than the roof of the night's high chamber,
 Deep as the shaft of sleep.

"And solitude will not cry there,
 Melancholy will not brood there,
 Hatred, with its sharp corroding pain,
 And fear will not come there at all:

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"Never will a tear or a heart-ache enter
Over that enchanted wall.

"But, O, if you find that castle
Draw back your foot from the gateway,
Let not its peace invite you,
Let not its offerings tempt you.
For faded and decayed like a garment,
Love to a dust will have fallen,
And song and laughter will have gone with sorrow,
And hope will have gone with pain;
And of all the throbbing heart's high courage
Nothing will remain."

But here the expression is simple enough to catch up the reader who does not dwell naturally in these metaphysical regions, and the effect is to prove more certainly than before that Mr. Squire is an original poet with a definite and valid way of looking at life.

With this growth of simplicity he has also extended his power of doing the simple things, of describing natural beauty; and his long poem *Rivers*, here collected for the first time, is a series of extraordinarily beautiful pictures, seen or imagined:

"Rivers I have seen which were beautiful,
Slow rivers winding in the flat fens,
With bands of reeds like thronged green swords
Guarding the mirrored sky;
And streams down-tumbling from the chalk hills
To valleys of meadows and water-cress beds,
And bridges where, under dark weed-coloured shadows,
Trout flit or lie.

" . . . O in reverie I know the Volga
That turns his back upon Europe,
And the two great cities on his banks,
Novgorod and Astrakhan;
Where the world is a few soft colours,
And under the dove-like evening
The boatmen chant ancient songs,
The tenderest known to man."

And these four extracts, though I did not choose them primarily for that purpose, illustrate what is, after all, the most important item in Mr. Squire's poetical equipment. I mean his rhythm. He is one of those poets who appeal in the first place by their rhythm, just as others appeal mainly by vowel-melody, and others by the evocation of pictures. I do not mean that any good poet does neglect any one of these three constituents of good verse. They are the indispensable channels through which feeling is conveyed or aroused; but any given poet will appeal chiefly by one of them, and with Mr. Squire it is rhythm. He is one of the few living men (Dr. Bridges and Mr. De la Mare are others) of whom it can be said that he has made definite and genuine discoveries in this direction. Most of our poets (and no blame to them) prefer to perform on the instruments which their predecessors have left them. Others, whom I like less, merely sit on the keyboard, as Liszt said. But Mr. Squire has made real discoveries of real value. The lovely, fluent stanza of Rivers, capable of assuming innumerable different shapes without losing its individuality, proves the worth of his metrical invention.

EDWARD SHANKS.

ROMANTICISM ENJOINED

ROUSSEAU AND ROMANTICISM. By Irving Babbitt.

8vo. 427 pages. Houghton Mifflin Company, Boston.

THE artist," wrote Conrad at the pinnacle of the romantic nineteenth century, "speaks to our capacity for delight and wonder, to the sense of mystery surrounding our lives: to our sense of pity, and beauty, and pain: to the latent feeling of fellowship with all creation—and to the subtle but invincible conviction of solidarity that knits together the loneliness of innumerable hearts to the solidarity in dreams, in joy, in sorrow, in aspirations, in illusions, in hope, in fear, which binds men to each other, which binds together all humanity—the dead to the living and the living to the unborn." No such breadth of understanding—I almost said vision of the artistic problem—illumes the pages of Mr. Irving Babbitt's *Rousseau and Romanticism*. Mr. Babbitt the critic is a Puritan, first and last. He does not like the romantic; that we have known for some time. He prefers the restrained, the balanced, the decorous, the intellectualized product of classicism. No one can quarrel with him for this; nor with his main contention that from Rousseau to Bergson "the analytic intellect" has been sadly held in abeyance. But why, after Lasserre and a host of others, he should devote 393 pages to give romanticism its *coup de grâce* puzzles the expectant reader.

Omnis definitio est negatio. Mr. Babbitt's book is a long account of what romanticism is not. It is not a return to the Middle Ages; that of course is merely an incident, a part of the trappings, as it were, like the blue flower of the German romanticists or the ivory tower of De Vigny or the red waistcoat of Gautier. It is not the typical, the commonplace, the broadly and universally human. It is not the classicism of Boileau and Pope: if they represent reason, romanticism represents unreason; if they uphold decorum, romanticism destroys it; if they stand for the analytic intellect, romanticism stands for intellectual confusion. In short, a thing is classical when representative of a class, "a thing is romantic when it is strange, unexpected, intense, superlative, extreme, unique." All this is true

enough and has long been admitted. Did not Victor Hugo say as much when, in 1830, he placed in Hernani's mouth the words:

"tu me crois peut-être
Un homme comme sont tous les autres, un être
Intelligent, qui court droit au but qu'il reva.
Détrompe-toi: je suis une force qui va,
Agent aveugle et sourd de mystères funèbres,
Une âme de malheur faite avec des ténèbres,
Ou vais-je? Je ne sais, mais je me sens poussé
D'un souffle impetueux?"

Certainly it is inevitable, if one is to paint romanticism adequately, to paint it against the pseudo-classical background. Otherwise one is likely to err and to think, as so many English critics have done, that the romantic is simply the imaginative. We can be grateful to Mr. Babbitt for upholding the distinctions; for, as he makes clear, each age has its "imaginative" and "realistic" phases, and the French seventeenth century has its romanesque writers who, like Corneille, emotionalized the reason and depicted it imaginatively in the lives of their characters. Thus Pascal's *moi haïssable* is quite a different type from the *moi* of Hugo's *Hernani*, for example. And the point of departure for any study of the romantic is without question the sentimental and expansive eighteenth century, no matter what country we are considering. So that Mr. Babbitt's repetition of the oft-quoted statement that "romanticism is all that is not Voltaire" is again in place.

But if by a series of negations we arrive at the limits within which the romantic spirit rules, we must everlastingly affirm if the reader is to get a just idea of what romanticism positively is. "If I object to a romantic philosophy," says Mr. Babbitt, "it is because I do not like its fruits." Well and good, reply "the smart young radicals" whom Mr. Babbitt would confound, but first show us that you appreciate the fruits; and cite to us one passage in your book to set beside the following from the no less negative *aperçu* by F. Y. Eccles: *La Liquidation du Romantisme* (page 7.):

"L'art qui en issu prétend satisfaire à une curiosité diffuse sur tout l'univers, en égalant l'opulence des rêves à la diversité des choses;

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et cette ambition, où des puissances d'observation et de vision jusqu'alors atrophiées ont trouvé enfin leur emploi, a enfanté (pour peu que le génie s'en soit mêlé) des œuvres débordantes de vie, d'une somptuosité de couleurs prestigieuse et d'une plasticité souveraine."

This is the art that produced the masterpieces of romantic genius, that inspired the Hugos, the Shelleys, the Mussets, the Keats, and even the Baudelaires, Swinburnes, and Claudels. Think of what literature would be if such as these had never written—and this is the crux of the matter, with all the emphasis of their expansive personalities to inspire them! It is futile to condemn an art on the basis of standards that are not artistic. We can affirm that no art is good that neglects human nature, and in so far as human nature is governed by ethical standards art must also reflect them. But just as we cannot judge science by ideals that are artistic, so we cannot judge art by ideals that are moral. *Le mal romantique* may be bad socially; whether it is bad artistically depends on the extent to which it destroys the formal control of the artist over his material. Goethe, as Mr. Babbitt twice remarks, was wont to judge Werther as "weakness seeking to give itself the prestige of strength"—but Goethe, just as other romantic geniuses of calibre, had the strength to objectify his experience and thus keep the poison of life from contaminating his art. How far Mr. Babbitt is from grasping the relation of art to truth, which is the only aspect of art that can be considered "ethical," is seen in these singular words on Flaubert:

"Beauty in the purely aesthetic and unethical sense that Flaubert gives to the word is little more than the pursuit of illusion. The man who thus treats beauty as a thing apart, who does not refer back his quest of the exquisite to some ethical centre, will spend his life, Ixion-like, embracing phantoms."

Madame Bovary may be a positive evil for those naive persons to whom all reading is a sensual, subjective experience. For such even the Sunday-school library has its dangers. But it is sufficient that Madame Bovary was true to human nature in all of its details to make it enter that field of a "higher reality" which Mr. Babbitt correctly attributes to Aristotle in its formulation; and therefore Madame Bovary belies the words we have just quoted. In this sense

the true artist always idealizes his subject—whether it is moral or immoral according to human conventions makes no difference—and places it where the ethical emotions do not exist.

Another matter, distinct from the artistic one, is the question of romanticism as a philosophy of life. We may admire the artistic creations of the romanticists and yet as critics of life reject the romantic *Weltanschauung* as a whole. In the latter field Mr. Babbitt is on more solid ground; and his chapters on Romantic Morality, Romantic Irony, Romanticism and Nature, are crowded with observations that are interesting and in large measure sound. As a rule of conduct, Kant's conception of the thing-in-itself or Faust's maxim *Gefühl ist Alles* is a dangerous principle for nine-tenths of humanity to follow. Far safer is the "supreme maxim of humanistic morality" as enunciated by Cicero: "The whole praise of virtue is in action." "Her conduct was reprehensible," says Rousseau of Madame de Warens, "but her heart was pure." Romanticism abounds in just such sophistries as this; and to a large extent Rousseau is the father of them all. The figure of the courtesan who has been rehabilitated through love—that stock-theme of nineteenth century dramatists and poets—goes back directly to La Nouvelle Héloïse. And when it comes to the corrective to such sentimentality, Romantic Irony either cleaves the heart in two, as in Heine; or leaves us hanging over the abyss of indeterminate desire, as in Baudelaire. As to Nature, Mr. Babbitt is equally certain that the romantic attitude is disastrous, though here his ethical bias again plays him strange tricks in evaluating literature. He says:

"It should be plain from what has already been said that the romanticist tends to make of nature the mere plaything of his mood. When Werther's mood is cheerful, Nature smiles at him benignly. When his mood darkens she becomes for him 'a devouring monster.' When it grows evident to the romanticist that nature does not alter with this alteration, he chides her at times for her impassibility; or again he seeks to be impassible like her, even if he can be so only at the expense of his humanity."

It is true, this projection of the ego into Nature leads in many cases to the pathetic fallacy: so in Rousseau or Wordsworth or Châteaubriand. But along with much that is mawkish, the identification of

nature and man has produced much that is beautiful and true; and Mr. Babbitt errs in throwing into the same crucible the sentimental outpourings of a René and such wonderful creations as Shelley's *Ode to the West Wind* and Leconte de Lisle's

"Midi, roi des étés, étendu sur la plaine,"

in which the symbolism is a perfect expression of the inner mood. In other words, "to live dangerously"—as Nietzsche said—is at once the curse and the blessing of the romantic point of view. It is only the vitally strong that can stand up under the lust of knowledge, the lust of sensation, and the lust of power, and turn these into channels in which they will be productive in the highest sense. The early Renaissance and romanticism have this in common, that they both subjected temperament to the restraining influence of form; see Nietzsche himself, whom Mr. Babbitt is leagues from appreciating. And where romanticism fails to do this and strikes out new forms, our verdict will depend on whether these derive from the subject treated and are thus the product of an inner necessity, or whether the form is an empty shell and thus merely rhetoric.

The weakness, therefore, of Mr. Babbitt's book is his moral preoccupation, the failure to distinguish between romanticism as an ethical system and romanticism as an art. Against both of these aspects Mr. Babbitt invokes not only the pseudo-classical rule of reason and the classical "insight into the universal" but also the Buddhist ideal of moral action. "The man," says Mr. Babbitt, "who drifts supinely with the current of desire is guilty, according to Buddha, of the gravest of all vices—spiritual or moral indolence. He, on the contrary, who curbs or reins in his expansive desires is displaying the chief of all virtues, spiritual vigilance or strenuousness. . . . Progress on this path may be known by its fruits—negatively by the extinction of the expansive desires (the literal meaning of *Nirvâna*), positively by an increase in peace, poise, centrality." The burden of moral responsibility, thinks Mr. Babbitt, then rests on everyone's shoulders: to this the artist is no exception. Granted; but not in the sense that the artist must enunciate moral principles; only in the sense that he must be true to his art and no more. How far the Western world has drifted away from the Oriental wisdom Mr. Babbitt would have us realize by the catastrophe

which has overwhelmed the civilization of modern Europe. Does Mr. Babbitt forget that Japan, whose art is Buddhistic, has been a party to this overthrow? No doubt romanticism as the "age of vital forces" has been too thoroughly discredited to go on as before. At the same time, let us not forget that during the last four hundred years it was the West and not the East that furthered human progress. Even in the field of ethics, Jean Jacques has his permanent values. The *Contrat Social* still contains workable ideas. The difficulty with all metaphysical systems is that they are one-sided. "*La métaphysique*," said Michelet, "*est l'art de s'égarer avec méthode*." It is not given men to see all angles at once. Thus human error is inextricably mingled in all human action, and the world will go on as before: the plaything of forces which the human mind will never fully fathom.

On the other hand, the artist—unlike the philosopher, the politician, the man of affairs—is a being apart. He does not join in the procession, he represents it. In the words of Conrad:

"The changing wisdom of successive generations discards ideas, questions facts, demolishes theories. But the artist appeals to that part of our being which is not dependent on wisdom; to that in us which is a gift and not an acquisition—and, therefore, more permanently enduring."

WILLIAM A. NITZE.

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